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Crowther

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Rev. John Wesley M.A.



Rev. Thomas Coke LL.D.



Rev. Charles Wesley M.A.



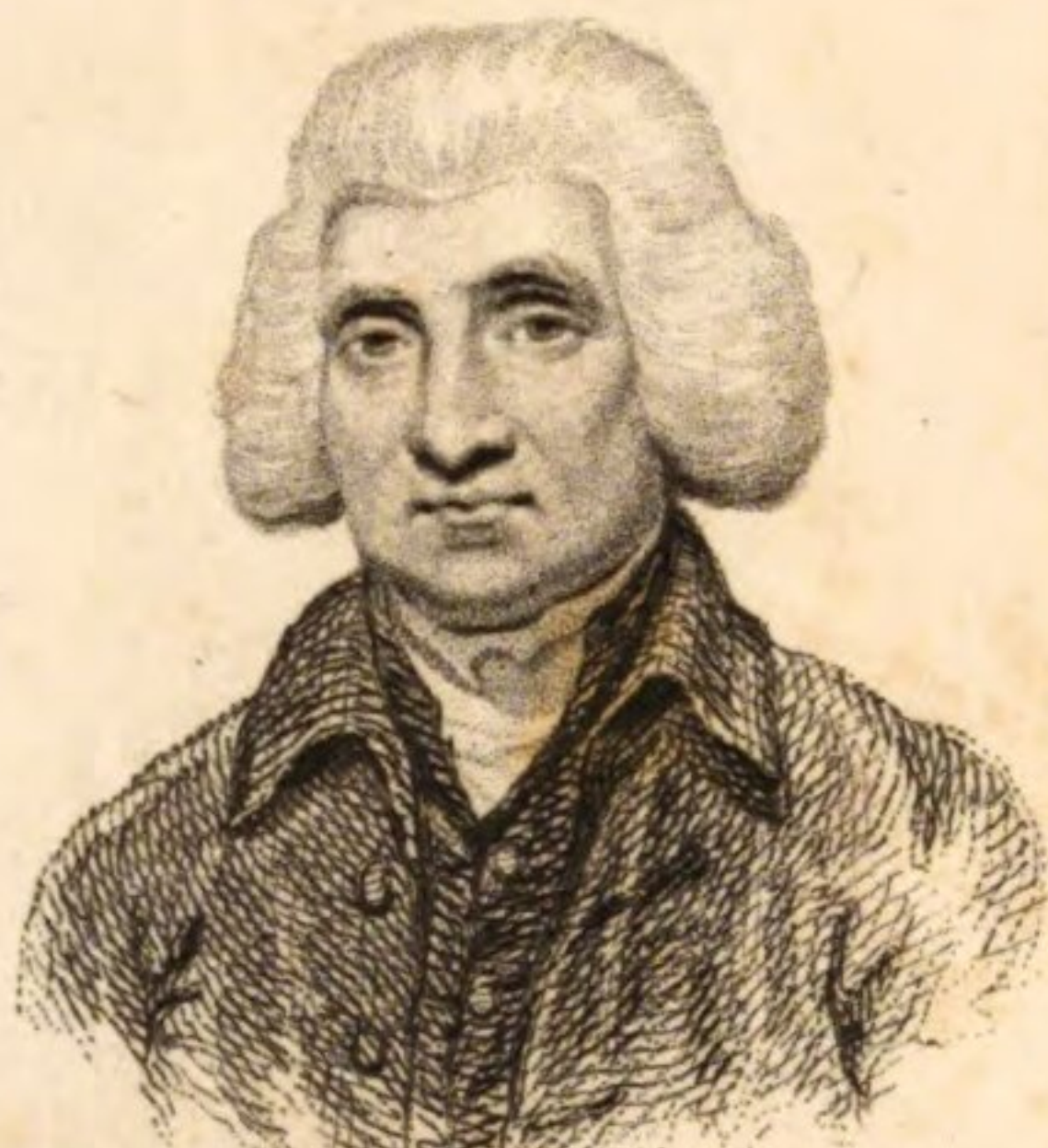
Rev. John Fletcher.



Rev. Tho. Hanby.



Rev. Tho. Welsh.



Rev. John Parrison.



Rev. John Nelson.



Tho. Webb Esq.



Rev. A. Mather.

A
PORTRAITURE OF METHODISM:
OR,
THE HISTORY
OF THE
Wesleyan Methodists.
SHEWING
THEIR RISE, PROGRESS, AND PRESENT STATE;
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES
OF SOME OF THEIR MOST EMINENT MINISTERS;
THE
DOCTRINES THE METHODISTS BELIEVE AND TEACH,
FULLY AND EXPLICITLY STATED;
WITH THE
Whole Plan of their Discipline,
INCLUDING THEIR
ORIGINAL RULES, AND SUBSEQUENT REGULATIONS.

ALSO,
A DEFENCE OF METHODISM,
CONTAINING
REMARKS ON TOLERATION, &c.

BY JONATHAN CROWTHER,

Who has been upwards of 30 Years a Travelling Preacher among them.

SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED AND CONSIDERABLY IMPROVED.

London:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY RICHARD EDWARDS,
Crane Court, Fleet Street;
AND SOLD BY T. BLANSHARD, CITY-ROAD,

1815.

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OR,
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Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

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1815.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author was induced to undertake this work, from a difficulty he had often experienced in recommending to the candid inquirers after **METHODISM**, any *one* book which would give them an adequate view of its History, its Doctrines, and its Discipline. Several publications had appeared on the subject; but none of them met his views, as books of general reference, on the distinguishing characteristics of Methodism.

On commencing the work, he did not intend to exceed the limits of a very small volume; as those who wished for fuller information would have recourse to primitive sources: the journals of Mr. **WESLEY**; his life by Dr. **WHITEHEAD**, and also by Dr. **COKE** and Mr. **MOORE**; and to a mass of original information in the **Methodist Magazine**. But matter multiplying and crowding in his progress, he was prompted to enlarge

it to its present bulk ; that the work, corresponding with its title, might be a true and faithful *Portraiture of Methodism*.

With regard to the Doctrines of Methodism, neither regular system, nor synopsis, had been attempted by any person ; though the want of such a system had been generally acknowledged. Those who said most in its favour, urged an appeal to the writings of Mr. WESLEY on every article. Though one might write a body of divinity without such extracts and mutilations ; yet it might not be deemed a faithful and authentic system of the *Credenda* of the Methodists. I am, however, happy to add, in this second edition, that what I have written on that subject, has not been disputed by the Conference, nor, to my knowledge, by any of my brethren.

As to the chapter on Discipline, though it may receive improvements from those who shall follow, there did not exist any publication so full, so particular, or so regularly arranged. My sole aim was, to simplify the subject, and make it easily understood by those who wished to consult it for edification. Hence, I hope it will give adequate information to persons less acquainted with our affairs ; and that the particulars it contains will be of frequent use also to the members of our society.

After executing my original design, impelled by circumstances, I was impressed with an idea that it would be highly proper to reply to some of the more plausible objections against Methodism. The people being daily attacked by learned and malicious foes, it was highly proper, that they should be armed with weapons of defence. And even those well acquainted with its history, needed new arguments to repel the ever-varying modes of attack.

At the time when I wrote *the Defence of Methodism*, clamours against the body, from a certain quarter, were numerous and loud. It was an important and perilous period; the dignitaries of the church, and a nobleman, high in office, having it in serious contemplation to narrow the privileges which the Dissenters and the Methodists had enjoyed under the Act of Toleration. In several sessions of Parliament, the noble lord had notified his intention to bring in a bill to that effect, and kept both the Dissenters and ourselves in a state of constant alarm.

A year before the bill was introduced, I had published, under a different title, the substance of what is contained in this book on that subject. Some thought my conjectures rash, and defective in candour; and some thought me bold beyond the line of prudence; but the event, in every view,

justified my zeal. He who sees the heart, knows that my conduct proceeded from purity of motive, and from an anxious concern for the safety of his cause, and the peace of his people. I am thankful that I did so, in that eventful crisis, when the Keeper of Israel so over-ruled the opposition, that our privileges became enlarged, and not abridged. The friends of religious liberty became so roused, and their energies so united, that the Conventicle Act, the Five-mile Act, and another Act against the Quakers, were as good as repealed; for which myriads gave glory to God, and felt the most grateful sentiments to the government under which they lived.

As a book of reference, I hope the following work will be found acceptable to all calm inquirers, as containing a fair and full account of a people so variously represented, and so signally owned and blessed of Providence. I am not conscious of having either withheld, or misrepresented any one occurrence essential to a knowledge of the subject. I have stated the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as it opened to my view.

This new edition has undergone a careful revision; many additions have been made to it, and a few things that were thought superfluous omitted. The chapters have been divided into

sections, for greater perspicuity and the convenience of the reader; and the chronological part is brought down to the assembling of the Conference in 1814. A memoir of the late Rev. T. Coke, LL. D. who for near forty years took a principal share in the concerns of the connexion, and who died on his passage to India, the third of May last, is also added.

This edition is likewise embellished by a Frontispiece, containing portraits of ten eminent Ministers of the Gospel; picturesque views of Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools, a fac-simile of Mr. Wesley's hand-writing, &c. &c.

That Methodism so called, is eminently a work, emanating from the counsel and wisdom of God;* and that it is the harbinger, and will very powerfully contribute to usher in the glory of the latter day, I do most firmly believe. May the Lord hasten it in its time.

JONATHAN CROWTHER.

NOVEMBER 21, 1814.

* See on this subject a copious sermon preached before the District assembled at Macclesfield, by Mr. Sutcliffe.

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Fac Simile of MR JOHN WESLEY'S Hand-Writing.
(in his Eighty-first Year.)

— If the & your Father cast their care on Him
that can do for them, He will deliver them out of
all their trouble. I am

Your Affectionate Brother Wesley

Fac Simile of MR CHARLES WESLEY'S Hand-Writing.
(in his Seventy-sixth Year.)

That you & yr brother & sister may like many
know the Good Part. The One thing needful, is the
constant prayer of. dear Charles

Your loving Father & friend
C. Wesley

A
Portraiture of Methodism :
OR,
THE HISTORY
OF THE
WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

CHAPTER I.
A GENERAL HISTORY OF METHODISM.

SECT. I.

Of Mr. Wesley's Ancestors.

JOH^N WESLEY, the father and founder of Methodism, was the second son of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, rector of Epworth, in Lincolnshire. But before I proceed to the history of this very extraordinary man, or describe the great work which he was the honoured instrument of spreading through this nation and America, I shall present my readers with a short account of his Ancestors. And as far as any account of the family can be traced back, it appears they were conspicuous for piety, and respectable on account of their learning.

BARTHOLOMEW WESLEY, Mr. John Wesley's great grandfather, was educated at one of our universities, and afterwards held the living of Allington, in Dorsetshire. Along with near two thousand other worthy clergymen, he was ejected by the act of Uniformity, in 1662. He studied physic at the university, as well as divinity: a practice which had been frequent, and

which was not then fallen wholly into disuse. He preached occasionally after his ejection, but applied himself chiefly to the practice of physic. He had a son called John, who died before him, and whose death expedited his own.

JOHN WESLEY, of whom I am now speaking, studied at Oxford, and took the degree of Master of Arts. There are no certain accounts of the time of his death, or of his age at that time. He was a person of early and exemplary piety. When twenty-two years old he began to preach, and was fixed at Whitchurch, in Dorsetshire, in 1658. After the Restoration, some persons gave him much trouble, because he would not read the book of Common-prayer; and made heavy complaints of him to the bishop of Bristol. Mr. Wesley waited on the bishop, when an interesting conversation took place, which Dr. Calamy published, and which the late Mr. Wesley has inserted in his journal. The bishop was so far satisfied, as to assure him he would not meddle with him. However, he had enemies, who seized him on the Lord's-day, in the beginning of 1662, before the act of Uniformity could eject him, and committed him to prison at Blandford. He was soon after liberated from confinement, on giving bail to appear at the next assizes, where he came off better than he expected. God raised him up several friends; inclined a solicitor to plead for him; and so restrained the wrath of man that the judge, though a very passionate man, did not say an angry word.

After this he preached every Lord's day, till August 17, when he delivered his farewell sermon, to a weeping audience, from Acts xx. 32. October the 26th, the place was declared vacant. On the 22d of February, 1663, he removed to Melcomb; but the corporation made an order against his settlement there, imposing a fine of 20*l.* upon

his landlady, and 5s. per week upon him, to be levied by distress. He went next to Bridgwater, and then to Ilminster and Taunton, where he met with great kindness from the several denominations, and had frequent opportunities of preaching. Here he found many friends, who were afterwards very kind to him and his numerous family. A gentleman allowed him to live rent free, in a house at Preston, two or three miles from Melcomb. He went to it with his family in the beginning of May, and continued to live there till he died. He had thoughts of going to America, but ultimately determined to remain in his native land. A number of serious people at Pool, gave him a call to be their pastor; in which situation he continued to the day of his death. The Oxford act compelled him to withdraw for a season from his family at Preston, and from his charge at Pool; but he preached wherever he could get a congregation. And after some time he returned home, and renewed his labours in the ministry. In these excursions, he was often disturbed; repeatedly apprehended; and four times imprisoned: once at Pool, for half a year; once at Dorchester, for three months: his other confinements were shorter. He was in many straits and difficulties, but was wonderfully supported and delivered. It is supposed that he died about the year 1670. But the vicar of Preston would not suffer him to be buried in the church.

From the grandfather of the late Mr. Wesley, on the father's side, we may turn to his maternal grandfather, the REV. SAMUEL ANNESLEY, LL. D. He was born at Killingworth, near Warwick, 1620, of religious parents, and was their only child. It has been said, that he was first cousin to the Earl of Anglesey. In his infancy he was strongly impressed with thoughts of being a minister, for which his parents intended him from his birth. And when about five or six years old, he began a practice,

which he continued afterwards, of reading twenty chapters in the Bible every day.

He lost his father when only four years old. But his mother took care of his education, having considerable property to enable her so to do. At the age of fifteen he went to the University at Oxford, and took his degrees in the usual course. His piety and diligence while there, attracted considerable notice. In 1644, he was ordained as chaplain of the ship called the *Globe*, under the Earl of Warwick, then Lord High Admiral of England. He went to sea with the fleet, but not liking it, he quitted it, and settled at Cliff, in Kent; where he met with great opposition. His predecessor had been displaced, for associating with the people on the Lord's-day to drink, dance, &c. Such a people naturally loved such a minister. They rose upon Dr. Annesley with spits, forks, and stones, and threatened to kill him. But he was firm, and resolved to stay with them, till God had prepared them by his labours to receive a good successor. He lived as he ought, and laboured hard; and in a few years the people were greatly reformed, and became exceedingly fond of him. But a signal providence directed him to a settlement in London, in 1652, by the unanimous choice of the inhabitants of the parish of St. John the apostle. Soon after he was made lecturer of St. Paul's: and in the year 1658, the parish of Cripple-gate was favoured with his settlement there.

He was a man of great integrity and disinterestedness; but was displaced from his lecture, because he would not comply with some things he thought to be wrong. All parties acknowledged him to be "an Israelite indeed." He suffered much from nonconformity; and such was the persecuting party spirit, that an angel from heaven would have been persecuted, had he been a Dissenter. In his sufferings God often appeared remarkably for him;

Mr. Wesley's Father.

and one person was struck dead, while signing a warrant to apprehend him.

As a minister, his labours were abundant. His sermons were instructive and affecting, as he spoke from the heart. And, in some degree, the care of all the churches was upon him. He was very useful in procuring good and useful ministers, for such places as wanted them; and was sometimes the chief, and in many cases, the sole instrument in the education, as well as the subsistence of young ministers. Innumerable were the instances in which he visited and relieved the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. He was enabled to say upon his death bed, "Blessed be God, I can say, I have been faithful in the ministry above fifty-five years." He had enjoyed a constant peace within, and an assurance of God's favour to him, for more than thirty years; and this was not in the least clouded in his last illness. He died full of peace, praise, and joyful hope.

SECT. II.

Of Mr. Wesley's Parents.

MR. John Wesley, of whom we have spoken before, left two sons, Matthew and Samuel; of the rest of his children we have no account. Persecution having greatly reduced the family, these two brothers must have experienced difficulties: but their industry surmounted all obstructions, and they rose to useful and respectable situations in life. MATTHEW followed the example of his grandfather, in studying physic; and by his medical practice acquired a handsome fortune.

SAMUEL, the father of the late Mr. John Wesley, was born

Mr. Wesley's Father.

about 1662, or a little before that time. It is thought he could not be more than eight or nine years old, when his father died. His attachment to the Dissenters was first shaken by a defence of the death of Charles I. and the proceedings of the Calf's Head Club. These things shocked him; and it is certain, that the major part of the Dissenters disapproved of them as much as he did. After spending some time at a private academy, when sixteen years of age, he walked to Oxford, and entered himself of Exeter College. He possessed no more money than 2*l.* 16*s.* nor any prospect of future supplies, except from his own exertions. Probably by assisting the younger students, and instructing those who chose to employ him, he supported himself till he took his bachelor's degree, without any other assistance, except a present of five shillings. He increased his stock to 10*l.* 15*s.* went to London, was ordained deacon, and obtained a curacy. A year after he was made chaplain on board the fleet. After filling this situation for one year only, he returned to London, and was a curate for two years; during which period he married, and had a son born. He wrote several pieces, which brought him into notice and esteem. A small living was given him in the country: and the friends of king James promised him preferment, if he would comply with the king's desire in supporting measures in favour of popery. But he absolutely refused to read the king's declaration in favour of popery: and though surrounded with courtiers, soldiers, and informers, he preached a bold and pointed discourse against it, from Dan. iii. 17, 18. He most cordially approved of the Revolution of 1688, and was the first who wrote in defence of it. This work he dedicated to Queen Mary, consort of William III. She presented him to the living of Epworth, in Lincolnshire, about the year 1693; and in 1723, the living of Wroote was given him in ad-

Mr. Wesley's Mother.

dition. He held the living of Epworth more than forty years; and had Queen Mary lived much longer, it is probable he would have had a more conspicuous situation; for which he was amply qualified. He was a constant preacher, a diligent visiter of the sick, and carefully watched over all who were committed to his care. But this did not divert him from literary pursuits; his most favourite study was the holy scriptures. He wrote a commentary, in Latin, on the book of Job, and many other things; was possessed of considerable poetic talents: but, what is far more important, he was a man of genuine piety: and firmly attached to justice, mercy, and truth. His integrity was conspicuous, and his conduct uniform, and that in various trying situations in life. When his sons, John and Charles, were pursuing a course of piety at Oxford, which would apparently militate against their preferment, he encouraged them to go on, wishing them to make Moses' choice, Heb. xi. 25. Though he had but a small income for a large family, yet he had always something to give to the needy. In conversation he was grave, instructive, and full of anecdote; and this talent his son John possessed, in a very high degree. In his last moments, he displayed much resignation and fortitude; and appeared full of faith, peace, and steadfast hope. He was free from the fear of death, and desired his children about him, to let him hear them talk of heaven.

Mrs. SUSANNAH WESLEY, the mother of the late Mr. John Wesley, was the youngest daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, and a few years younger than her husband. She was trained up in the doctrine and discipline of the Lord, and was early under religious impressions; she searched into the evidences of religion; examined the controversy between the Dissenters and the Established Church; and displayed a great concern for the instruc-

Mr. Wesley's Mother.

tion and welfare of her children. She was a woman truly devout. About the year 1700, she made a resolution to spend one hour, morning and evening, in private prayer and meditation. And this resolution she sacredly kept ever after, except when sickness prevented, or something absolutely indispensable obliged her to shorten the time. And, when opportunity offered, she sometimes spent a little time in these exercises at noon also. At those seasons she often wrote down her thoughts on different religious subjects. Meantime she was very diligent in business, and exceedingly attentive to the concerns of her family. All her employments were well arranged, by which she saved much time, and kept her mind from distraction and perplexity. She had no fewer than nineteen children; and ten of these, at least, grew up to be educated; they all received the first part of their learning from her; and, probably, they could not have had a better instructor. Disapproving of the common methods of governing and instructing youth, she adopted others which she thought more rational. Their rising, and going to bed; their dressing, eating, and exercise, were all regulated by rule, except in case of sickness. They were early impressed with the propriety of entire obedience to their parents. As soon as they could speak, they were taught the Lord's-prayer, and to repeat it at going to, and rising out of bed; and as they grew older, they were taught to pray in a larger way. She made it a rule, never to attempt to teach them to read, till they were five years old. As soon as they knew their letters, they were first put to spell, and read one line, and then a verse; always taking care to be perfect in their lesson as they went on.

Mrs. Wesley ever discharged the duties of a wife, and a mother, with the greatest punctuality and diligence. The letters she wrote to her sons, when at Oxford, give

Mrs. Wright.

a very favourable view, both of her piety and knowledge. But though a woman of piety, she had not a clear idea of justification by faith, and the direct witness of the Spirit, till near her latter end; which kept her from enjoying those comforts which would otherwise have been her portion. However, at last, she was filled with peace and joy in believing, and left the world with cheering prospects of eternal happiness; she had no doubt or fear, nor any desire, but “to depart and be with Christ.” August 1st. 1742, Mr. John Wesley committed the body of his mother to the earth, in Bunhill-fields burying-ground, opposite to which stands the New Chapel, City-road, where he himself is now buried.

SECT. III.

Of Mr. Wesley's Sisters and Brothers.

Mrs. Wesley had several daughters, whose education she carefully superintended; most of them had fine poetic geniuses, but especially Mrs. Wright, who was her mother's tenth or eleventh child. It has been said, that when she was not more than eight years of age, she could read the Greek Testament. Being gay, sprightly, witty, and humorous, her parents felt pain and fear concerning her, especially as she was sometimes betrayed into little inadvertencies, which, in some measure, contributed to her unhappiness in future life. Meeting with a disappointment, she soon after married a person, no way adapted to make her happy, and by whom she was unkindly treated. Her situation preyed upon her spirits; her health gradually declined; and she sunk into such a degree of melan-

Mrs. Hall.—Mr. Samuel Wesley.

choly as made her truly wretched. Most of her verses which have been preserved, were written during this period, and though good poetry, bear evident marks of deep bodily and mental affliction. But after passing many years in this gloomy state, she obtained those comforts of religion, which soothed her mind, and gave her peace; though she never fully recovered her bodily health. After persevering in a course of piety for some years, patient in suffering, and waiting in joyful hope of a better country, on March 21, 1751, she died in the Lord. Mr. Charles Wesley, her brother, preached her funeral sermon, from Isa. lx. 20. *Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.*

Another of Mr. Wesley's sisters was married to a Mr. HALL, who was one of his pupils at Oxford, and supposed to be an upright, pious man. In regard of appearance, he was reckoned one of the finest looking men that ever ascended the pulpit; but the grandeur of his figure was a snare to his soul. After some years, he deserted his wife, and led an abandoned course of life; he is said to have died of a broken heart. Mrs. Hall bore her trials with remarkable patience and resignation. She survived all her sisters and brothers, and died about four months after Mr. John Wesley, on the 12th of July, 1791, in peace and joyful hope.

SAMUEL WESLEY, junior, was older than his brother John, almost eleven years, and sixteen older than Charles. He was sent to Westminster School in 1704, and admitted a king's scholar in 1707. Before he left home, his mother had diligently and successfully taught him the knowledge of religion, and his mind was brought under religious impressions. When at school, she wrote to him, to put him in mind of his obligations to devote

Mr. Samuel Wesley.

himself to the service of God, especially as he was intended, by his own choice, for the Christian ministry. She advised him to be diligent in his studies, and to go through his employments methodically. She told him, that when she was at her father's house, she used to allow herself as much time for recreation, as she spent in private devotion; not that she always spent so much, but gave herself leave to go so far, but no farther: and she fixed so much time for sleep, eating, company, &c. "Begin and end the day," said she, "with him, who is the Alpha and Omega; and if you really experience what it is to love God, you will redeem all the time you can for his more immediate service."—"Be very strict in observing the Lord's-day. In all things endeavour to act upon principle, and do not live like the rest of mankind, who pass through the world like straws upon a river, which are carried which way the stream or wind drives them."

When senior scholar at Westminster, the bishop of Rochester, predecessor of Atterbury, took him to his seat, at Bromley, in Kent, to read to him in the evenings. But as he was then eagerly pursuing his studies, what would have gratified many, greatly mortified him. His mother's advices were duly attended to by him, and he retained his sobriety, the fear of God, and consequently a regard for religion.

In 1711, he was elected to Christ Church, in Oxford, and here also was deemed an excellent classical scholar. After he had taken his degree of Master of Arts, he was sent for to officiate at Westminster school; and soon after he took orders, under the patronage of Dr. Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, and dean of Westminster. He became a wise and able preacher, and his conduct was exemplary, both as a Christian and a minister. He had a nice sense of honour; was a man of great integrity, and

Mr. Samuel Wesley.

greatly hated falsehood and duplicity : he was very humane, and of a charitable disposition ; and was remarkable for filial affection, and duty to his parents.

He was greatly esteemed by Lord Oxford, Bishop Atterbury, Mr. Pope, and several other persons of the first character and literary talents.

Bishop Atterbury had incurred the hatred of the prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, and the rest of the ministry, by opposing their measures. And on the 24th of August, 1722, he was apprehended, under an accusation of being concerned in a plot for subverting the government, and bringing in the Pretender. Mr. Wesley's intimacy with him, made Walpole dislike him also. Yet Samuel was not disaffected to the present reigning family. And as he probably considered Bishop Atterbury as being innocent, his friendship for him remained unaltered. His attachment to Atterbury, and his personal disapprobation of Walpole's administration, blocked up his way to preferment at Westminster. He left the situation in 1732, and became master of the Free Grammar-School, at Tiverton, in Devon, and presided over it till he died. In 1736, he published a quarto volume of poems, for which he obtained a numerous and respectable list of subscribers. Several of these are very witty and satirical, as well as instructive ; and some are grave, serious, and descriptive.*

The following beautiful verses were written by him, and are a paraphrase on those words in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah : *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever.* They were occasioned by the death of a young lady.

* A new edition of these Poems has been lately published in a pocket size.

Mr. Samuel Wesley.

The morning flowers display their sweets,
 And gay their silken leaves unfold;
 As careless of the noon-day heats,
 And fearless of the evening cold.

Nipt by the wind's unkindly blast,
 Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,
 The momentary glories waste,
 The short-liv'd beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,
 When youth its pride of beauty shews;
 Fairer than spring the colours shine,
 And sweeter than the virgin rose.

Or worn by slowly rolling years,
 Or broke by sickness in a day;
 The fading glory disappears,
 The short-liv'd beauties die away.

Yet these new rising from the tomb,
 With lustre brighter far shall shine,
 Revive with ever-during bloom,
 Safe from diseases and decline.

Let sickness blast, and death devour,
 If heaven must recompense our pains;
 Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
 If firm the word of God remains.

As a high churchman, Mr. S. Wesley had objections to *extempore* prayer. In the duodecimo edition of his poems are the following lines on *forms* of prayer, which for the sprightly turn of thought they contain, we shall insert.

Form stints the spirit, *Watts* has said,
 And therefore oft is wrong;
 At best a crutch the weak to aid,
 A cumbrance to the strong.

Old *David*, both in prayer and praise,
 A form for crutches brings;
 But *Watts* has dignify'd his lays,
 And furnished him with wings.

Ev'n *Watts* a form for praise can choose,
 For prayer, who throws it by;
 Crutches to walk he can refuse,
 But uses them to fly.

Mr. Samuel Wesley.

Mr. S. Wesley's principles led him to disapprove of the conduct of his brothers John and Charles, when they became itinerant preachers; several letters passed between him and his brother John, both on the *doctrines* which he taught, and his *manner* of teaching them.

His health was not good when he left Westminster, and it was not much improved by his removal to Tiverton. On the night of the 5th of November, 1739, he went to bed, apparently as well as usual, was taken very ill about three in the morning, and after four hours illness, died at seven, in the 49th year of his age; and lies buried in the church-yard at Tiverton, with the following inscription on his grave-stone:

Here lie interred
The remains of the Rev. SAMUEL WESLEY, A. M.
Some time Student of *Christ Church Oxon*:
A man, for his uncommon wit and learning,
For the benevolence of his temper,
And simplicity of manners
Deservedly beloved and esteemed by all.
An excellent Preacher:
But whose best sermon
Was, the constant example of an edifying life.
So continually and zealously employed
In acts of beneficence and charity
That he truly followed
His blessed Master's example
In going about doing good.
Of such scrupulous integrity,
That he declined occasions of advancement in the world
Through fear of being involved in dangerous compliances,
And avoided the usual ways to preferment
As studiously as many others seek them.
Therefore after a life spent
In the laborious employment of teaching youth,
First, for near twenty years
As one of the ushers in *Westminster School*;
Afterwards for seven years
As Head Master of the Free School at *Tiverton*,
He resigned his soul to God,
Nov. 6, 1739, in the 49th year of his age.

Mr. Charles Wesley.

CHARLES WESLEY was born on the 18th of December, in the year 1708, being about five years younger than his brother John, and sixteen younger than Samuel. He was born several weeks before the proper time, and appeared rather dead than alive. He received the first rudiments of his learning at home, from his mother, as did all the other children.

In 1716, he was sent to Westminster School, and placed under the care of his brother, who was then usher. Samuel being a high churchman, he instilled the same principles into his brother Charles.

During his stay at school, Mr. R. Wesley, a gentleman of large fortune in Ireland, wrote to his father, and asked if he had a son named *Charles*: if so, he would make him his heir. And for several years, Charles's education was regularly paid for by a person in London; doubtless by order of this gentleman. One year a stranger called to see him, probably Mr. Wesley himself, talked largely with him, and asked him if he was willing to go to Ireland. Charles wrote to his father, who left him to his own choice. He chose to stay in England. The gentleman then found and adopted another Charles Wesley. From this root sprang the present family, who, by some alteration, are denominated *W-ll-sl-y's*.

In 1721, Charles was admitted a scholar at St. Peter's College, Westminster. In 1726, he was elected to Christ Church, Oxford, at the same time that his brother John was Fellow of Lincoln College. "My first year at College," said he, "I lost in diversions; the next I set myself to study. Diligence led me into serious thinking: I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young students to accompany me, and observe the *method of study*, prescribed by the university. This gained me the harmless name of *Methodist*." Does it not appear from these words of his, that the term

Mr. Charles Wesley.

Methodist, really originated in their rigid adherence to this *method* of study? It was easy and natural, to give the termination *ist* to *method*, and so to denominate an observer of method, *Methodist*. Meantime the natural association of ideas would bring to remembrance, at least in those readers of Roman history, whose memories were tenacious and quick, that description of physicians who were called Methodists.

In the year 1728, and in the twentieth year of his age, he began to apply himself more closely to study and to be more serious and circumspect in his general deportment. He became zealous for God, and in his endeavours to do good to men; both to their bodies and souls.

He proceeded Master of Arts, in the usual course, and thought of nothing but of spending all his days at Oxford, as a tutor in the university. Entering into holy orders he exceedingly dreaded. But in 1735, his brother John had such influence over him, as to prevail upon him to receive ordination, and to accompany him to Georgia in North America. Afterwards, he was chiefly employed in travelling with his brother, through different parts of Great Britain and Ireland; and in preaching, and assisting to form and instruct the several Methodist societies.

His preaching, especially in his younger days, was frequently attended with extraordinary power, and many were convinced of sin, and brought truly to repent, and savingly to believe. He married Miss Sarah Gwynne, a person of respectable family connexions, in the county of Brecon, in South Wales; and after this, he chiefly divided his time between Bristol and London, where he was very useful in the conversion and spiritual profit of many souls. As a preacher, he was mighty in the scriptures and possessed a remarkable talent of uttering the

Mr. Charles Wesley.

most striking truths with simplicity, brevity, and energy. He was an excellent poet; and wrote the chief part of the hymns that are in our large hymn-book, and in general use in our congregations, and which continue to be the means of daily edification to thousands. Had he engaged in the higher walks of verse, there is no doubt but he would have been esteemed a considerable poet, even by those who now despise his hymns; some of which are certainly among the best pieces in that species of composition. He wrote short hymns on the most important passages in the Old and New Testaments, and in these he has expressed his opinion on the leading doctrines of the Gospel, with energy and beauty. He published several volumes of sacred poetry besides.

He was of a warm and lively disposition: of great frankness and integrity, and generous and steady in his friendships. His love of simplicity, and utter abhorrence of hypocrisy, and even of affectation in the professors of religion, made him sometimes appear severe on those who assumed a consequence, on account of their experience, or were pert and forward in talking of themselves and others. As a husband, a father, and a friend, his character was amiable.

His lively turn of thought did not leave him in his old age, as the following lines will testify.

THE MAN OF FASHION.

What is a modern Man of Fashion?
A man of taste and dissipation:
A busy man without employment,
A happy man without enjoyment.
Who squanders all his time and treasures,
On empty toys, and tasteless pleasures;
Visits, attendance, and attention,
And courtly airs, too low to mention.
In sleep and dress, and sport, and play,
He throws his worthless life away;

Mr. Charles Wesley.

Has no opinion of his own,
But takes from leading Beaux the ton ;
With a disdainful smile or frown,
He on the rif-raff crowd looks down :
The world polite, his friends and he,
And all the rest are—Nobody !

Taught by the Great his smiles to sell,
And how to write, and how to spell ;
The great his oracles he makes,
Copies their vices and mistakes ;
Custom pursues, his only rule,
And lives an ape, and dies a fool !

Mr. C. Wesley had a weak body, and enjoyed but a poor state of health during most of his life ; he brought this on by too much study and abstinence at Oxford. In his last illness he was reduced to extreme weakness ; but he was filled with humility and resignation. He had no transports of joy, but a good hope and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace.

When near death, and when scarcely able to articulate his words, his poetic spirit made its last effort in the following lines, which Mrs. Wesley wrote as he dictated :

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem ?
Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart :
O could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into eternity.

He died March 29, 1788, aged seventy-nine years and three months, and was buried in *Mary-le-bone* church-yard, at his own desire. The pall was supported by eight clergymen of the church of England.

On his tomb-stone is the following inscription. The poetic lines were written by himself on the death of one of his friends : they could not be more aptly applied to any person than to Mr. Charles Wesley.

Mr. Charles Wesley.

Here lie the Remains of
 The Rev. CHARLES WESLEY, M. A.
 Who departed this Life, March the 29th, 1788,
 in the 80th Year of his Age.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:
 Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their
 labours; and their works do follow them.

With poverty of spirit bless'd
 Rest, happy Saint, in Jesus rest;
 A Sinner sav'd, through grace forgiven,
 Redeem'd from earth to reign in heav'n!
 Thy labours of unwearied love,
 By thee forgot, are crown'd above;
 Crown'd through the mercy of thy Lord,
 With a free, full, immense reward!

A Tablet to his memory is placed on the right side of
 the communion-table of the New Chapel in the City-road,
 bearing the following inscription:

Sacred to the Memory
 Of the late Rev. CHARLES WESLEY, M. A.

Educated at *Westminster* school,

And sometime *student* of Christ Church, *Oxford*;

As a *preacher*, he was eminent for abilities, zeal, and usefulness,

Being *learned* without pride,

And *pious* without ostentation;

To the sincere diffident *Christian*,

A Son of Consolation;

But a Son of Thunder

To the vain boaster, the hypocrite, and the profane.

He was the first who received the name of *Methodist*,

And joining with his brother the Rev. JOHN WESLEY,

In the plan of Itinerant *preaching*,

Endured hardship, persecution, and disgrace

As a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST:

Contributing largely by the usefulness of his labours

To the first formation of the *Methodist Societies*

In these kingdoms.

As a *Christian Poet*, he stood unrivalled,

And his *Hymns* will convey instruction and consolation

To the faithful in CHRIST JESUS

As long as the *English* language shall be understood.

He was born the 18th December, 1708.

And died the 29th March, 1788.

A firm and pious believer in the *doctrines* of the Gospel,

And a sincere friend to the Church of ENGLAND.

Mr. John Wesley ; his Birth and Baptism.

SECT. IV.

*Of Mr. John Wesley, and of the Rise of Methodism—
his Travels to America and Germany.*

WHEN we view Mr. JOHN WESLEY rising into public notice, from the bosom of a family which had long been venerable for christian knowledge and piety, and surrounded with such respectable brothers and sisters, we feel our minds prepared for something great and good, beyond what is common ; and when we proceed to remark his education, and his religious instruction especially, we shall see the best foundation laid for useful knowledge, and genuine Christianity.

There having been some difference in the accounts given of Mr. Wesley's age, by different persons of the family, the following certificate, sent by his father to the bishop, before he was ordained priest, will be satisfactory on this point :

“ Epworth, August 23, 1728.

“ John Wesley, M. A. Fellow of Lincoln College, was twenty-five years old the 17th of June last, having been baptized a few hours after his birth, by me,

“ SAMUEL WESLEY, Rector of Epworth.”

It appears then, by this account, that Mr. Wesley was born the 17th of June, old style, in the year 1703 ; and I have heard him say, that he was baptized by the name of JOHN BENJAMIN ; that his mother had buried two sons, one called John, and the other Benjamin, and that she united their names in him. But he never made use of the second name.

He received the first rudiments of learning from his mother, and she was admirably qualified for this office in her own family. She was not only attentive to their progress in

Is placed at the Charter house ; and removes to Westminster.

learning, but she likewise endeavoured to give them as early as possible, just and useful notions of religion. Her mind seems to have been led to a more than ordinary attention to her son John in this respect ; for in one of her private meditations, when he was about eight years of age, she mentions him in a manner that shews how much her heart was engaged in forming his mind for religion. The meditation is as follows :

“ Evening, May 17, 1711. Son *John*.

“ What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies ? The little unworthy praise that I can offer, is so mean and contemptible an offering, that I am even ashamed to tender it. But, Lord, accept it for the sake of Christ, and pardon the deficiency of the sacrifice.

“ I would offer thee myself, and all that thou hast given me ; and I would resolve, (O give me grace to do it,) that the residue of my life shall all be devoted to thy service. And I do intend to be more *particularly* careful of the soul of this child, that thou hast so mercifully provided for,* than ever I have been ; that I may do my endeavour to instil into his mind the principles of thy true religion, and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success.”

Her good endeavours were not without the desired effect ; for about this time he began to receive the sacrament.

In 1714, he was placed at the *Charter-house*, and became distinguished for his diligence and progress in learning ; and in 1719, went to *Westminster-school*, where he made a more rapid progress in Hebrew and Greek.

* This alludes to his providential escape from fire, which consumed his father's house a little time before. John was the last of the children that was taken out whilst the house was in flames, and but just in time to save his life, as the roof fell the moment of his escape, which was effected by one man standing on the shoulders of another, and taking him out of the window.

Goes to Oxford, is ordained, and elected Fellow of Lincoln College.

Being intended for the church, in 1720 he went to Oxford, and entered a student at Christ-church college. His natural temper in his youth was gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humour. When he was about twenty-one years of age, "he appeared, as Mr. Badcock has observed, the very sensible and acute collegian—a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments." His perfect knowledge of the classics gave a smooth polish to his wit, and an air of superior elegance to all his compositions. He had already begun to amuse himself with writing verses; though most of his poetical pieces at this period were I believe, either imitations or translations from the Latin.

Shortly after he went to Oxford, he took his degree of Batchelor of Arts, and was ordained Deacon, September 19, 1725, by Dr. Potter, bishop of Oxford; and on March 17, 1726, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln college.

His father now invited him to spend some time with him in the country. Accordingly he left Oxford in April, and staid the whole summer at Epworth and Wroote. During this time he usually read prayers and preached twice on the Lord's day, and otherwise assisted his father as occasion required.

Mr. Wesley returned to Oxford on the 21st of September, and resumed his usual course of studies. His literary character was now established in the University: he was acknowledged by all parties to be a man of talent, and an excellent critic in the learned languages. His compositions were distinguished by an elegant simplicity of style, and justness of thought, that strongly marked the excellence of his classical taste. His skill in logic, or the art of reasoning, was universally known and admired. The high opinion that was entertained of him in this respect was soon publicly expressed by choosing him Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes on the

Takes his degree of Master of Arts, and becomes Curate to his Father.

7th of November, when he was but little more than twenty-three years of age.

On the 14th of February, 1727, he took his degree of Master of Arts, and acquired considerable reputation in his disputation for his degree.

On Sunday, the 22d of September, 1728, he was ordained Priest, by Dr. Potter, who had ordained him Deacon in 1725. In October he set out for Lincolnshire, where he acted as curate to his father; and did not again visit Oxford till the June following. In August he returned to his charge at Wroote, and continued there till November; when on receiving a letter from Dr. Morley, the rector of his college, requesting him to reside at the university, he quitted his father's curacy, and went to reside at Oxford.

He soon became very seriously and exemplarily pious. This was considerably promoted by reading Bishop Taylor's Rules and Exercises of Holy Living, and Mr. Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life. His example and advice, under God, induced his brother Charles, who was also at college, to become pious. They gave great attention to reading books of devotion, praying much and fervently, and received the Lord's Supper every week. Others imbibed the same spirit, and associated with them for the purposes of piety. They regulated their time and employments by certain rules, which accidentally got them the nick-name of *Methodist*. As the disciples of Christ were first called Christians in Antioch, so John Wesley and his followers, were first called Methodists at the University of Oxford.

It is worthy of attention, that this name of *Methodist*, which was originally given in derision, has since been contended for by the *Arminians* and *Calvinists*, as being peculiarly honourable; while others have gone as far as conscience would permit, and perhaps sometimes a little

First obtains the Appellation of Methodist at Oxford.

farther, to escape what they deemed an odious appellation.

The founders of the Methodists, were students at the university of Oxford, and were first called the *Sacramentarians*, then *the Godly Club*, and finally *Methodists*. A Fellow of Merton College, observing the regular method in which they divided their time between their devotions, their studies, their rest, &c. said, "Here is a new set of *Methodists* sprung up," alluding to an eminent college of physicians at Rome, who were so called on account of putting their patients under a peculiar regimen.* But it is not generally known, that the name of *Methodist* had been given long before the days of Mr. Wesley, to a religious party in England, which was distinguished by some of those marks which are supposed to characterize the present Methodists. A person called John Spencer, who was librarian of Sion College, 1657, during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, in a book which he published, consisting of extracts from various authors, speaks of the eloquence and elegance of the sacred Scriptures, and asks, "where are now our Anabaptists, and plain pack-staff Methodists, who esteem all flowers of rhetoric in sermons, no better than stinking weeds?" By the Anabaptists, we know that he means a denomination of Christians, which is still in existence; and though we have not at this time any particular account of the Methodists of that day, it seems very probable that our description of religionists, during that fertile period, was denominated Methodists. These, it would seem, distinguished themselves by plainness of speech, despising the ornaments of literature and the charms of eloquence in their public discourses. This might have been known to the Fellow of Merton College, who gave the Oxonian Pietists the name of Methodists, though it seems probable

* See Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Cent. 17. Sect. 2. p. 1.

Preaches extempore for the first time— Goes as a Missionary to America.

Mr. Wesley never caught the idea.* Gale also, in his fourth Part of the Court of the Gentiles, mentions a religious sect, whom he calls "The New Methodists."

In 1732, this pious company were joined by Mr. Benjamin Ingham, and soon after by Mr. James Hervey; and in 1735, Mr. George Whitefield, was added to the number. These were all collegians, and must be considered as the *first Methodists*. But how greatly has this grain of mustard-seed grown and spread! Mr. Wesley says, "In 1729, my brother and I reading the Bible, saw inward and outward holiness, followed after it, and incited others so to do. In 1737, we saw that this holiness comes by faith, and that men are justified before they are sanctified, But still holiness was our point, *inward and outward holiness*."

The first sermon he delivered extempore, was in All-Hallow's Church, Lombard-street, London, in the beginning of the year 1735. At that time, and for years after, to preach without a book was considered as a very wonderful thing.

In 1735, he was prevailed upon to go as a missionary to Georgia, in America. In the ship in which he crossed the Atlantic ocean, he became acquainted with the Moravians. By them he was taught the way of the Lord more perfectly; particularly, that holiness comes by faith.

On Tuesday, Oct. 14, 1735, Mr. Wesley, his brother Charles, Mr. Benjamin Ingham, and M. Delamotte, son of a merchant in London, took boat for Gravesend, in order to embark for Georgia. Their motive in leaving their native country, was not to gain riches or honour, but to glorify God.

Mr. Wesley immediately began to learn the German lan-

* See Spencer's Things New and Old, p. 161. A. D. 1658.

Manner of living on shipboard—encounters some violent storms.

guage, in order to converse with the Moravians, twenty-six of whom were on board. On Sunday the 19th, he preached extempore, and then administered the Lord's supper.

After they got to sea, their common way of living was this: from four to five in the morning, they employed in private prayer. From five to seven they read the bible together, carefully comparing it with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven they breakfasted; and at eight had public prayers. From nine to twelve, Mr. Wesley usually learned German, his brother Charles wrote sermons, Mr. Delamotte learned Greek, and Mr. Ingham instructed the children. About one they dined. From dinner to four, they spent in reading to such as each of them had taken into a sort of charge, or in talking seriously to them. At four were evening prayers; when either the second lesson was explained (as it *always* was in the morning), or the children were catechised and instructed. From five to six they again used private prayer. From six to seven he read in their cabin to two or three of the passengers (about eighty of whom were on board), and each of his brethren did the same to a few more in other cabins. At seven he joined with the Germans in their public service; and Mr. Ingham read between decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight they met again to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten they went to bed, and neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship, could deprive them of the refreshing sleep which God gave them.

In an early part of their voyage, they encountered three storms, and the third was a very violent one. "The waves of the sea were mighty, and raged horribly. They rose up to heaven above, and clave down to hell beneath." After prayers, they spent two or three hours in conversing suitably to the occasion, confirming one another in a calm submission to the wise, holy, and

Arrives at Savannah—observes the behaviour of the Germans.

gracious will of God. And now a storm did not appear so terrible as before.

Mr. Wesley had before observed the great seriousness of the Germans, as well as their humility, meekness, and patience. He had now an opportunity of seeing how far they were delivered from the spirit of fear. When in the midst of the Psalm with which their service began, the sea broke over them, and split the mainsail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed them up; a terrible scream began among the English; but the Germans calmly sung on. Mr. Wesley afterwards asked one of them, "Were you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, No." Mr. Wesley asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" The Germans mildly replied "No; our women and children are not afraid to die." From the Germans Mr. Wesley went to the crying and trembling English, and pointed out to them the difference, in the hour of trial, between them that feareth God, and him that feareth him not.

After falling in with the skirts of a hurricane, and encountering another storm, on the 5th of February, they arrived safe in the Savannah River, and cast anchor. The next morning, about eight o'clock, they first set foot on American land. Mr. Oglethorpe, the governor of the Colony, and with whom they had crossed the Atlantic ocean, led them to a rising ground, where they all knelt down to return thanks to God.

The house in which Mr. Wesley and his companions were to reside, not being ready, they took up their lodgings with the Germans. "We had now," says Mr. Wesley, "an opportunity, day by day, of observing their whole behaviour. They were always employed, always cheerful, and in good humour one with another. They had put away all anger, strife, wrath, bitterness, cla-

Enters upon his ministry, and forms a society.

mour and evil speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things." Again, says Mr. Wesley, "After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity of the whole, almost made me forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies, where form and state were not; but Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman presided; yet with the demonstration of the spirit and of power."

Sunday, March the 7th, he entered upon his ministry at Savannah, by preaching on the epistle for the day, 1 Cor. xiii. His congregations and prospects were at first very encouraging, and he was ready to form very sanguine expectations as to the success of his labours. He bestowed part of his labours upon Frederica; and upon one occasion especially was in very great danger of losing his life by drowning, between that place and Savannah.

Not finding any door open for the prosecution of the grand design which induced him to go to America, the conversion of the Indians, he and his companions considered in what way they might be the most useful to their charge at Savannah. And they agreed, 1. To advise the most serious among them to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week in order to improve, instruct, and exhort one another. 2. To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other. It is very probable that this plan was adopted from a similar one which they saw among the Germans; and here was the origin of Classes and Bands among the Methodists, which have been so useful to myriads.

He wished to go and preach to the Indians, but the way was not open: the tribes being then much engaged

Converses with the Indians—their manner of living—returns to England.

in private wars. He says, "Thursday, July 1, the Indians had an audience, and another on Saturday, when Chicali their head man, dined with Mr. Oglethorpe. After dinner, I asked the grey-headed old man, "What he thought he was made for?" He said, "He that is above, knows what he made us for; we know nothing. We are in the dark; but white men know much; and yet white men build great houses, as if they were to live for ever. But white men cannot live for ever. In a little time, white men will be dust as well as I." Mr. Wesley told him, "If red men will learn the good book, they may know as much as white men. But neither we nor you can understand that book, unless we are taught by him that is above; and he will not teach, unless you avoid what you already know is not good." The Indian answered, "I believe that; he will not teach us, while our hearts are not white. And our men do what they know is not good: they kill their own children. And our women do what they know is not good: they kill the child before it is born. Therefore he that is above does not send us the good book." He had several other interesting conversations with some of the principal Indians, which will be found in his *first* Journal.

A Frenchman, who had been a prisoner of war for some months among these Indians, gave Mr. Wesley the following account of their manner of life. He said, "They do nothing but eat, drink, and smoke, from morning till night, and in a manner from night till morning. For they rise at any hour of the night when they wake; and after eating and drinking as much as they can, go to sleep again." And here is a true *Delineation of the Religion of Nature*.

December 24, 1737, he sailed over Charles-town-bar, in the Samuel, Captain Piercy, and landed at Deal, on the first of February. Mr. Whitefield had just sailed

The reason of his leaving America, with reflections on his going thither.

for America ; neither of them knowing any thing of the others situation, or designs.

Mr. Wesley's departure from America was expedited by an event, which he does not fully explain in his Journal, which has caused some to hesitate respecting the propriety of his conduct : or at least *that propriety* which might be expected in so eminent a man. But, his biographers, Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore, have thrown such light upon the affair, as must do away all suspicions with regard to the integrity of Mr. Wesley's conduct. It appears that a deep-laid scheme was plotted with design to ruin him in the highest sense of the word. But his soul escaped as a bird out of the snare, and he held fast faith, and a good conscience. He arrived in London, after, an absence of two years and four months.

In the beginning of the second Journal, he says, "Many reasons I have to bless God, (though the design I went upon did not take effect,) for not having been carried into that strange land, contrary to all my preceding resolutions. Hereby, I trust he hath in some measure humbled me and proved me, and shewn me what was in my heart. Hereby, I have been taught to *beware of men*. Hereby I am come to know assuredly, that if *in all our ways we acknowledge God*, he will, where reason fails, *direct our paths*, by lot or by the other means which he knoweth. Hereby I was delivered from the fear of the sea, which I had both dreaded and abhorred from my youth. Hereby God has given me to know many of his servants, particularly those of the church of Hernhuth. Hereby my passage is open to the writings of holy men, in the German, Spanish, and Italian tongues, &c."

He had not been a week in London, before he met with Peter Bohler, a Moravian Bishop, just landed from Germany. With this good man he became very intimate, and it was by him he was convinced of the want of *that*

He forms a society in London, and preaches in different churches.

faith whereby alone we are saved. He immediately began to preach according to his new views ; and the first person to whom he offered *salvation by faith alone* was a prisoner, of the name of Clifford, under sentence of death. It was with this man, that Mr. Wesley first prayed extempore. After a space, he rose up, and eagerly said, " I am now ready to die : I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me." The same composed cheerfulness accompanied him when carried to the place of execution ; and in his last moments he was the same, enjoying a perfect peace, in confidence that he was *accepted in the Beloved*.

Mr. Wesley, and his friends, now began to form themselves into a little society, as had been done before at Oxford, and afterwards in Georgia ; and agreed upon certain rules for the regulation of their life and conduct. He preached frequently in different churches, but generally gave offence to the rich by his doctrine, so that one church after another was shut against him. As yet, he had not that faith in Christ that brings peace and assurance, accompanied with the Spirit of God witnessing with the spirit of believers. But he soon obtained this inestimable blessing ; for one evening in May, he went to a Christian society in Aldersgate-street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, says he, " while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt I did trust in Christ ; Christ alone, for salvation ; and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away *my* sins, even mine, and saved *me*, from the law of sin and death."

Shortly after this, he determined, if God should permit, to retire for a short time into Germany ; he had formed this resolution before he left America, hoping that some conversation with those holy men, whom he expected to

Embarks for Holland, and travels through Germany.

find at Hernhuth, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and who knew how to bear with them who were weak, would contribute to his establishment in true religion. He embarked at London, June 13th, and on the 15th reached Rotterdam in Holland.

In travelling through Holland and Germany, he conversed with, and was hospitably entertained by many persons, who were happy partakers of the faith of the gospel; this was the case, especially at Marienbourn, where he first conversed with Count Zinzendorf, and other eminent witnesses of the power of true religion.

On Tuesday, the first of August, he arrived at Hernhuth, a settlement of the Moravians, in upper Lusatia. Hernhuth is a village, that at that time contained about a thousand inhabitants, gathered out of different nations, and who had fled thither to escape the pollutions of the world, that they might live wholly to God, in discipline, as well as in faith and practice. Here was a body of truly primitive apostolic Christians. No immorality was allowed among them, and every branch of pure and undefiled religion was zealously enforced. Here Mr. Wesley conversed with persons of deep understanding and experience in the things of God, and heard many of them preach, to his great edification and the establishment of his soul in the truth as it is in Jesus. One of them gave him, at his request, the following definition of the full assurance of faith; "Repose in the blood of Christ; a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favour; serene peace and tranquillity of mind, with a deliverance from fleshly desire, and from every outward and inward sin. In a word, the heart which before was tossed like a troubled sea, is still and quiet, and in a sweet calm." These Moravian brethren claim kindred, in a spiritual sense, with Martin Luther, John Calvin, and John Huss.

Returns to England, and preaches in London.

Mr. Wesley's second Journal will give the reader much interesting information respecting the church at Hernhuth, and the school, or academy, at that place.

In his return from Hernhuth, he learnt that the Lutherans, as well as the Papists, were great enemies to the Moravian brethren. He spent a night or two in Mentz, and while there, went to the great church, and copied from a paper on the door, a notice, of which the following is a translation.

"A full Release for the poor Souls in Purgatory."

"His Papal Highness, Clement XII. hath this year, 1738, on the 7th of August, most graciously privileged the Cathedral church of St. Christopher in Mentz, so that every priest, as well secular as regular, who will read mass at an altar for the soul of a Christian departed, on any holiday, or on any day within the octave thereof, or on two extraordinary days, to be appointed by the ordinary, of any week in the year, may each time deliver a soul out of the fire of purgatory."

After an absence of three months, on the 16th of September, Mr. Wesley returned to London, and preached wherever he was invited, in the churches in that city; boldly declaring, *by grace ye are saved through faith*. This doctrine was opposed by most of the clergy; and in most places, the genteel part of the congregation was offended at the crowds that followed him, so that he was frequently told after preaching, that he must preach there no more. This at length became so general, that it amounted to an exclusion from almost all the churches in London.

Having now passed through all the preparatory steps, and being every way qualified and prepared, the Lord soon led him forth in the way in which he intended him to go, and begun to work mightily by his ministry.

Mr. Wesley preaches for the first time in the open air, in Bristol.

SECT. V.

Of Mr. Wesley's Labours as an itinerant Preacher, and the Progress of Methodism till the first Conference in 1744.

In 1739, Mr. Wesley having been denied the use of the churches in London, by which means his opportunities of preaching became very limited, and as he durst not be silent, at the request of Mr. Whitefield, he went to Bristol; and for the first time preached in the open air, in that city, in opposition to his former notions and habits. But he observes, "I have since seen abundant reason to adore the wise providence of God herein, making a way for myriads of people, who never troubled any church, or were likely so to do, to hear that word which they soon found to be the power of God unto salvation."

On Sunday, the first of April, he was invited to a little society of serious people, who had been accustomed to meet together for devotional purposes in *Nicholas street*, to whom he expounded our Lord's sermon on the mount: "One pretty remarkable precedent, says he, of *field preaching*, though I suppose *there were churches* at that time also." "Monday the second," he continues, "I submitted to be *more vile*, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people." His preaching was attended with surprising success, so that in a very short time, a few, and afterwards a greater number, agreed to meet together to edify and strengthen one another, as the people already did in London.

Is attacked by friends and enemies, for his irregularity.

He continued in Bristol and its neighbourhood till June ; and thus describes his public labours through the week. " Every morning, I read prayers and preached at Newgate. Every evening I expounded a portion of scripture, at one or more of the societies. On Monday in the afternoon, I preached abroad near Bristol ; on Tuesday at Bath and Two-Mile-Hill, alternately. On Wednesday, at Baptist Mills. Every other Thursday, near Pensford. Every other Friday, at Kingswood. On Saturday in the afternoon, and Sunday morning, in the Bowling Green. On Sunday, at eleven, at Hanham Mount : at two, at Clifton ; at five, at Rose Green."

He tells us, he could scarcely reconcile himself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields and highways ; " having been, says he, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls *almost a sin*, if it had not been done *in a church*."

It has been often suggested by his opponents, that the plan of *Methodism* was the result of a long premeditated design : but on a careful examination into the very *minutiae* of his life till this time, no such design appears. He positively asserts the contrary, and every circumstance collected from his private papers confirms the truth of his assertion. In what he did, he appears to have followed the openings of Providence.

He was now attacked by friends as well as enemies, for his *irregularity*. To one who had expostulated with him on this subject, (I believe the late Rev. *James Hervey*,) he thus expresses himself in a letter : " As to your advice that I should settle in College, I have no business there, having now no office, and no pupils. And whether the other branch of your proposal be expedient, viz. to accept of a cure for souls, it will be time enough to consider when one is offered to me. But in

Justifies his conduct by the necessity of his situation.

the mean time, you think, I ought to be still; because otherwise I should invade another's office. You accordingly ask, how it is that I assemble Christians, who are none of my charge, to sing psalms, and pray, and hear the scriptures expounded: and think it hard to justify doing this, in other men's parishes, upon catholic principles?

“Permit me to speak plainly. If by *catholic* principles, you mean any other than *spiritual*, they weigh nothing with me: I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the holy scriptures. But on scriptural principles, I do not think it hard to justify whatever I do. God in scripture commands me, according to my power, to instruct the ignorant, reform the wicked, confirm the virtuous. Man forbids me to do this, in another's parish; that is, in effect, not to do it at all; seeing I have now no parish of my own, nor probably ever shall. Who then shall I hear? God or man? *If it be just to obey man rather than God, judge you. A dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel.* But where shall I preach it upon the principles you mention?—not in any of the christian parts, at least, of the habitable earth. For all these are, after a sort, divided into parishes. Suffer me to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon *all the world* as *my parish*; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad-tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to: and sure I am, that his blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work he hath given me to do. His servant I am, and as such am employed according to the plain direction of his word, *as I have opportunity doing good to all men.* And his providence

Holds a conversation with the bishop of Bristol.

clearly concurs with his word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, *and go about doing good.*"

We have here a specimen of the manner in which Mr. Wesley reasoned, to satisfy himself that his conduct was justifiable before God and man. His arguments are taken from the obligation laid upon him to preach the gospel, the necessity of his situation, and the success of his labours. It is evident through the whole of his history, that, in addition to the two first considerations, the success of his labours in diffusing knowledge among the people, and in reforming their manners, bore down all objections in his mind, against the irregularity of his proceedings.

On the twelfth of May, the foundation stone was laid in Bristol, of the *first* Methodist chapel in England.

In August, this year, Mr. Wesley had a conversation with the bishop of Bristol, on *Justification by faith alone*; a part of which has been preserved.

Bishop. "Why, Sir, our faith itself is a good work, it is a virtuous temper of mind.

Wesley. My Lord, whatever faith is, our church asserts, we are justified by faith alone. But how it can be called a good work, I see not: it is the gift of God; and a gift that presupposes nothing in us, but sin and misery.

B. How, Sir! Then you make God a tyrannical Being if he justifies some without any goodness in them preceding, and does not justify all. If these are not justified on account of some moral goodness in them, why are not those justified to?

W. Because, my Lord, they resist his Spirit; because they will not come to him that they may have life; because they suffer him not, to work in them both to will and to do. They cannot be saved, because they will not believe.

Conversation with the bishop of Bristol,

B. Sir, what do you mean by faith?

W. My Lord; by justifying faith I mean, a conviction wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost, that *Christ* hath loved *him*, and given himself for *him*, and that through *Christ*, *his* sins are forgiven.

B. I believe some good men have this, but not all. But how do you prove this to be the justifying faith taught by our church?

W. My Lord, from her Homily on Salvation, where she describes it thus; *A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.*

B. Why, Sir, this is quite another thing.

W. My Lord, I conceive it to be the very same.

B. Mr. Wesley, I will deal plainly with you. I once thought you, and Mr. Whitefield, well-meaning men; but I cannot think so now. For I have heard more of you: matters of fact, Sir. And Mr. Whitefield says in his Journal, 'There are promises still to be fulfilled in me.' Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing!

W. My Lord, for what Mr. Whitefield says, Mr. Whitefield, and not I, is accountable. I pretend to no extraordinary revelations, or gifts of the Holy Ghost: none but what every Christian may receive, and ought to expect and pray for. But I do not wonder your lordship has heard facts asserted, which if true, would prove the contrary: nor do I wonder, that your lordship, believing them true, should alter the opinion you once had of me. A quarter of an hour I spent with your lordship before, and about an hour now: and perhaps you have never conversed one other hour with any one who spake in my favour. But how many with those who spake on the other side! so that your lordship could not but think

on Justification by Faith alone.

as you do, But pray, my Lord, what are those facts you have heard?

B. I hear you administer the sacrament in your societies.

W. My Lord, I never did yet, and I believe never shall.

B. I hear too, many people fall into fits in your societies, and that you pray over them.

W. I do so, my Lord, when they shew by strong cries and tears, that their soul is in deep anguish; I frequently pray to God, to deliver them from it, and our prayer is often heard in that hour.

B. Very extraordinary indeed! Well, Sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it you very freely. You have no business here. You are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore, I advise you to go hence.

W. My Lord, my business on earth is, to do what good I can. Wherever therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here: therefore, here I stay. As to my preaching here, a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me, and woe is me if I preach not the gospel, wherever I am in the habitable world. Your lordship knows, being ordained a priest, by the commission I then received, I am a priest of the church universal: and being ordained as Fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God, in any part of the church of England. I do not therefore conceive, that in preaching here by this commission, I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, 'Shall I obey God or man?' But if I should be convinced in the mean while, that I could advance the glory of God, and the salvation of souls in another place,

Preaches to the colliers at Kingswood, and in Moorfields, London.

more than in Bristol; in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do."

Methodism now began to make a rapid progress, and societies were formed, not only in London and Bristol, but in many adjacent places; and some even at a considerable distance. The colliers at Kingswood, a people famous till now for neither fearing God nor regarding man: so ignorant of the things of God, that they seemed but one remove from the beasts that perish, were visited by Mr. Wesley; and by the grace of God his labours among this uncivilized people were not in vain. Before the Methodists began to preach at Kingswood, the colliers were a terror to the whole country round; but the change produced by their preaching was so great and sudden, as to excite universal attention and admiration.

After a short visit to London, Mr. Wesley again returned to Bristol: and in October, upon a pressing invitation he set out for *Wales*. The churches were here also shut against him, as in England, and he preached in private houses or in the open air, to a willing people, who appeared ripe for the gospel.

The same year, (the churches having been shut against him) he made a virtue of necessity, and stood up in Moorfields and other public places in London, and preached the gospel to vast multitudes. November 11, this year he began to preach in a building in Moorfields, London, in which the king's cannon had formerly been cast, and which was many years after known by the name of *The Foundry*. It was at this time, that class-meetings were instituted, as we learn from the introduction to the rules of the society. However it appears that this institution was not properly organized and established till the year 1742.

In February, 1742, many persons met together at Bristol, to consult with Mr. Wesley concerning a proper

The origin and nature of class-meeting.

method of paying the public debt, contracted by building. Nearly three years before this period, a house had been built here, called the *New Room*; and notwithstanding the subscriptions and public collections made at the time to defray the expense, a large debt remained upon it. And it was now agreed, 1. That every member of the society who was able, should contribute a penny a week. 2. That the whole society should be divided into little companies or *classes*, about twelve in each class: and, 3. That one person in each class should receive the contribution of the rest, and bring it to the stewards weekly.

In March, the same thing was also done in London, though for a different purpose. "I appointed, says Mr. Wesley, several earnest and sensible men to meet me, to whom I shewed the great difficulty I had long found, of knowing the people who desired to be under my care. After much discourse, they all agreed, there could be no better way to come to a sure, thorough knowledge of each person, than to divide them into classes like those at Bristol, under the inspection of those in whom I could most confide. This was the origin of our classes in London, for which I can never sufficiently praise God: the unspeakable usefulness of the institution, having ever since been more and more manifest."

The person appointed to visit and watch over these little companies or classes, was called the *leader* of that class to which he received his appointment. Mr. Wesley called the *leaders* together, and desired that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those he saw weekly. They did so; and many disorderly walkers were detected. Some were turned from the evil of their ways, and some put away from the society. The rest saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence. At first the *leaders* visited each person at his own

Tickets given to members of the society.

house; but this was soon found inexpedient. It required more time than the leaders had to spare; many persons lived with masters, mistresses, or relations, where they could not be so visited; and where misunderstandings had arisen between persons in the same class, it was more convenient to see them face to face. On these, and some other considerations, it was agreed, that each leader should meet his class all together, once a week, at a time and place most convenient for the whole. He began and ended the meeting with singing and prayer; and spent an hour in conversing with those present, one by one. By this means a more full inquiry was made into the behaviour of every person; advice or reproof was given as need required; misunderstandings were removed, and brotherly-love promoted.

As the people increased, and societies were multiplied, Mr. Wesley found it necessary to add some further regulations, to ascertain who belonged to the society, and to prevent improper persons from imposing upon him. To every person therefore, of whose seriousness and good conversation he had no doubt, he gave a *ticket*, on which was printed a short portion of scripture, and on which he wrote the date and the person's name. He who received a ticket was by that made a member of the society, and immediately appointed to meet in some one of the classes; and this method of admitting members was adopted throughout the whole Methodist connection. These tickets, therefore, introduced those who bore them, into fellowship one with another, not only in one place, but in every place where any might happen to come. As they were common to all the members of the societies every where, so a stranger in any place, who held one, was immediately received as a brother, and admitted to their private assemblies. But lest any improper person should be suffered to continue in the society, and bring

The origin of watch-nights—Lay-preachers first employed.

disgrace on the whole body by bad conduct, it was agreed that these tickets should have no force for a longer time than three months. Mr. Wesley determined, that, where he could stay a few days, he would speak with every member of the society once a quarter, and change the tickets: and that the preachers appointed to act as his *assistants*, should every where do the same. By this means the tickets were changed four times in a year; and this was called *visiting the classes*. Mr. Wesley observes, "By these (tickets) it was easily distinguished, when the society were to meet apart, who were members of it, and who not. These also supplied us with a quiet and inoffensive method of removing any disorderly member, who has no new ticket at the next quarterly visitation, and hereby it is immediately known, that he is no longer of the community."

April 9, 1742, the first watch-night was held in London. The custom originated with the colliers of Kingswood, near Bristol, who had been in the habit, when slaves to sin, of spending every Saturday night at the ale-house. They now devoted that night to prayer and singing of hymns. Mr. Wesley hearing of this, and of the good that was done, resolved to make it general. At first, he ordered watch-nights to be kept once a month, when the moon was at the full: and afterwards fixed them for once a quarter.

About this period, Mr. Wesley began to employ a few laymen to assist him in the work; Mr. Maxfield was among the first. He was remarkably useful, and excited the astonishment of those who heard him; and from this time the number of laymen gradually increased in proportion to the increase of the societies, and the want of preachers; the clergy generally standing at a distance from a plan of so much labour.

Mr. Wesley had now a call to extend his labours

Mr. John Nelson first preaches at Birstal in Yorkshire.

further North, than he had hitherto done. John Nelson, a mason of Birstal, in Yorkshire, had been in London some time, and heard the gospel, at the Foundry. His understanding was informed, his conscience awakened, and feeling the whole energy of the truths he heard delivered, he received that peace, which the Apostle speaks of, as the fruit of justifying faith. He received *the knowledge of salvation by the remission of his sins*. He had full employment and large wages in London, but he found a constant inclination to return to his native place. He did so; and his relations and acquaintance soon began to inquire what he thought of this new faith, which had occasioned much noise and talk in Yorkshire. John told them point blank, this new faith, as they called it, was the old faith of the gospel: and related to them his own experience. This was soon noised abroad; and more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things. Some put him upon the proof of the great truths such inquiries naturally led him to mention. And thus he was brought unawares to quote, explain, compare, and enforce several parts of scripture. This he did at first, sitting in his house, till the company increased so that the house could not contain them. Then he stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do in the evening, as soon as he came from work. His word was soon made a blessing to the people: many believed his report, and were turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto the living God. Mr. Ingham hearing of this came to Birstal, inquired into the facts, talked with John himself in the closest manner, both touching his knowledge and experience. The result was, he encouraged him to proceed, and invited him to come, as often as convenient, to any of those places where he himself had been, and speak to the people as God should enable

Mr. Wesley visits Birstal and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

him. Things being in this state, John Nelson, invited Mr. Wesley to come down amongst them; and May 26, he arrived at Birstal. Here he found a *lay-preacher*, who, undeniably, had done much good. Many of the greatest profligates in all the country were now changed. Their blasphemies were turned to praise. The whole town wore a new face: such a change did God work by the artless testimony of one plain man! Mr. Wesley was so fully convinced of the great design of a preached gospel, that if sinners were truly converted to God, and a decent order preserved in hearing the word, he thought it a matter of less consequence, whether the instrument of the good done, was a *layman*, or *regularly* ordained. And if a regularly ordained preacher did no good, and a layman by preaching did; it was easy to judge which was acting most agreeably to the design of the gospel, and most for the benefit of society. It is probable that such reflections as these had arisen in his mind on the fact before him; and his judgment was confirmed by repeated facts of the same kind which occurred. And thus he was induced to make use of the labours of *laymen* on a more extensive scale than had hitherto been allowed.

After preaching at Birstal, he went forward to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Having witnessed the success of the gospel among the colliers at Kingswood, he had long had a desire to visit those about Newcastle, and now accomplished his wish; at least in part, and made way for future visits. He was not known to any person in Newcastle; and therefore he, and John Taylor, who travelled with him, put up at an inn. On walking through the town, after taking some refreshment, he observes, "I was surprised: so much drunkenness, cursing, and swearing, even from the mouths of little children, do I never remember to have seen and heard before in so short a time.

Preaches on a hill to a vast multitude of people.

Sunday, May 30, at seven in the morning, he walked down to Sandgate, the poorest and most contemptible part of the town, and standing at the end of the street with John Taylor, began to sing the hundredth psalm. "Three or four people, says he, came out to see what was the matter, who soon increased to four or five hundred. I suppose there might be twelve or fifteen hundred before I had done preaching: to whom I applied those solemn words, *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed.*

"Observing the people when I had done, to stand gaping and staring upon me with the most profound astonishment, I told them, If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again. At five, the hill on which I designed to preach, was covered from the top to the bottom. I never saw so large a number of people together, either in Moorfields, or at Kennington Common. I knew it was not possible for the one half to hear, although my voice was then strong and clear; and I stood so as to have them all in view as they were ranged on the side of the hill. The word of God which I set before them was, *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely.* After preaching, the poor people were ready to tread me under foot, out of pure love and kindness. I was some time before I could possibly get out of the press. I then went back another way than I came. But several were got to our inn before me; by whom I was vehemently importuned to stay with them, at least a few days: or however, one day more. But I could not consent; having given my word to be at Birstal, with God's leave, on Tuesday night."

Mr. Wesley again visited Newcastle the latter end of

The first conference held in London.

the year. His brother Charles had spent some weeks here, preaching with great success, and a society was already formed. While here, Mr. Wesley introduced preaching at five o'clock in the morning, a thing never heard of before in these parts. He also engaged a piece of ground to build a chapel, and laid the foundation-stone on the 20th of December.

In 1743, the rules of the society were first published, which still continue to direct the moral and religious conduct of the Methodists. Even at this very early period of Methodism, Mr. Wesley found an open door to preach the gospel in many places in different parts of England and Wales.

In the year 1744, he preached at Brentford, Marlborough, Bath, Bristol, London; at many places in Cornwall and Wales; at Gloucester, Stroud, Cheltenham, Tewksbury, Evesham, Sheffield, Epworth in Lincolnshire, Birstal, and other places in the West Riding of Yorkshire; at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Durham, and many other places in the North, in Cheshire, Derbyshire, &c. &c.

During this year, he received some pleasing accounts of a revival of religion having broke out in the English army on the continent.

SECT. VI.

Of the Progress of Methodism, from the assembling of the first Conference, to that in 1754.

In June, 1744, the first conference was held in London. It consisted of six clergymen, and a few lay-preachers, which Mr. Wesley had appointed to meet him from dif-

Mr. Wesley travels through various parts of the north of England.

ferent parts of the country to confer with them on the affairs of the societies; and the result of their consultations they set down to be the *rule of their future practice*. The subjects of their deliberations were proposed in the form of questions, which were amply discussed; and the questions with the answers agreed upon were written down under the title of “Minutes of several conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others;” commonly called “Minutes of the Conference;” there was no annual publication of the Minutes till the year 1763.—On Christmas-day, Mr. Wesley drew up the rules of the Bands, as they still continue.

August 1, 1745, the second conference was held in Bristol. They now reviewed their doctrines, and added such rules of discipline, as the increase of the work required, or prudence suggested.

Mr. Wesley not only studied and laboured hard, at the same time enduring much unmerited reproach; but he passed through much fatigue and danger in his travels. In his Journal, he tells us, that in the latter end of February, he preached at Nottingham. The next day, a friend piloted him through the mire, and water, and snow, to Sykehouse. Proceeding northward, he found much snow about Borough-bridge, which made him travel so slowly, that night overtook him when he had six or seven miles, to go to the place where he had intended to lodge. The next day the roads were abundantly worse; the snow being deeper, the causeways were impassable, and a hard frost succeeding the thaw, the ground was like glass. At that time, and for some years after, there were no turnpike-roads in those parts of England. He was therefore obliged to walk, it being impossible to ride; passing over dreary moors, which appeared great white pathless wastes, till at length, late in the evening, he reached Newcastle. “Many a rough

Receives an interesting letter from Dr. Doddridge.

journey," said he, "have I had before; but one like this I never had."

May 13, 1746, the third conference was held also in Bristol. It consisted of the two Wesleys, two other clergymen, and of five lay-preachers. The conversation at this time was of a nature calculated to explain and elucidate the great doctrines of the gospel.

About this time, Mr. Wesley received the following interesting letter from the candid and amiable Dr. Doddridge.

"Northampton, July 29, 1746.

"Rev. and dear Sir,

"I am truly glad that the long letter I last sent was agreeable to you. I bless God, that my prejudices against the writers of the Establishment was so early removed and conquered. I greatly rejoice when I see in those whom, upon other accounts, I most highly esteem as the excellent of the earth, that their prejudices against their brethren, of any denomination, are likewise subdued, and that they are coming nearer to the harmony, for which I hope when we shall be one in Christ Jesus.

"I have always esteemed it to be the truest act of friendship, to use our mutual endeavours to render the characters of each other as blameless, and as valuable as possible. And I have never felt a more affectionate sense of my obligations, than when those worthy persons who have honoured me with their affection and correspondence, have freely told me what they thought amiss in my temper and conduct. This, therefore, dear sir, is an office which you might reasonably expect from me, if I had for some time enjoyed an intimate knowledge of you. But it has always been a maxim with me, not to believe

Introduces Methodism into Ireland.

any flying story, to the prejudice of those, whom I had apparent reason, from what I knew of them, to esteem. And consequently, as I should never make this a foundation, you must be contented to wait longer before you will be likely to receive that office of fraternal love, which you ask from,

Rev. and dear Sir,

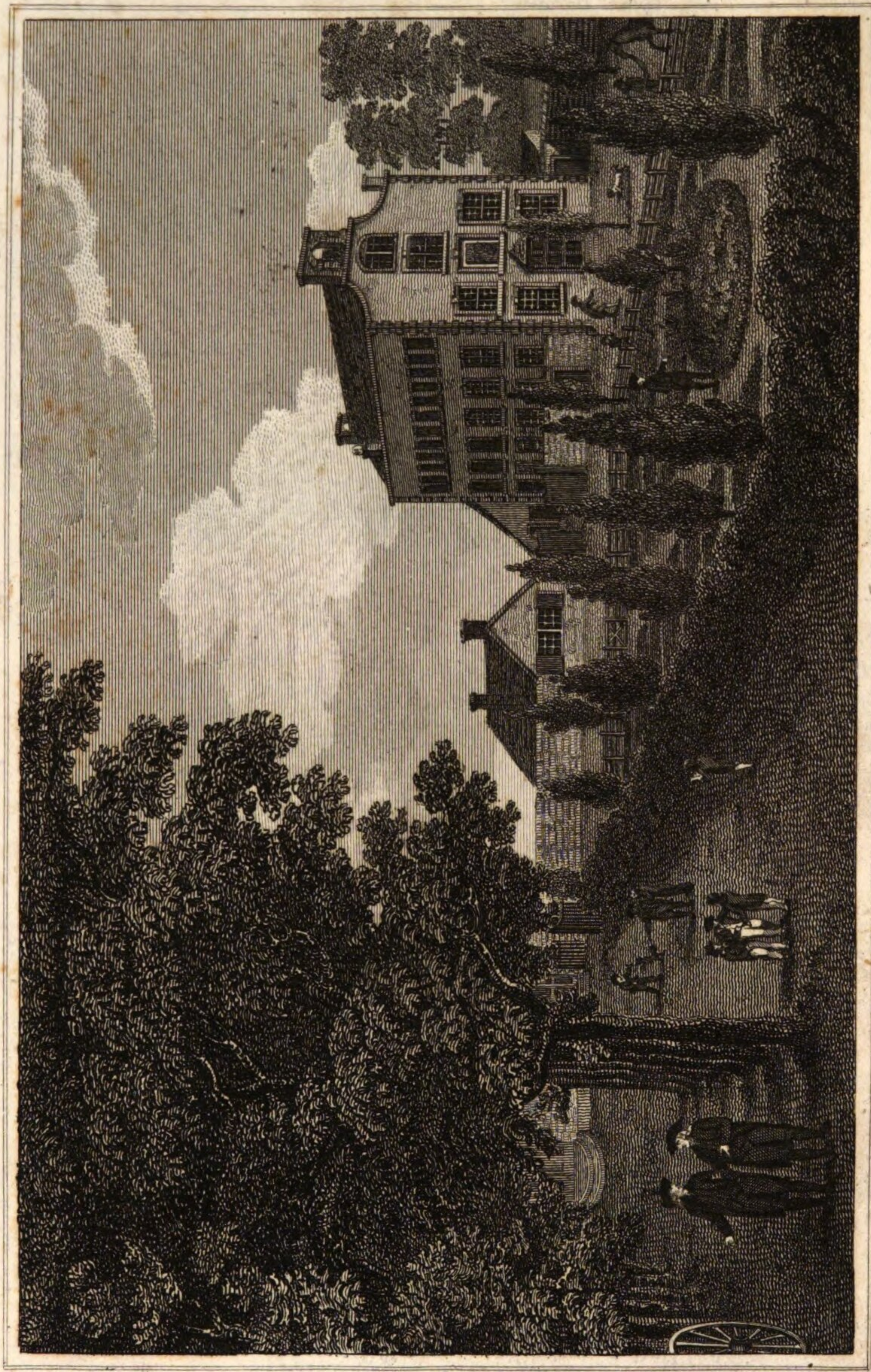
Your obliged and affectionate

Brother and Servant,

P. DODDRIDGE."

"P. S. Your caution has suggested a thought to me, whether it be modest to call ourselves humble? If the expression mean, a real readiness to serve in love in any thing low, as washing the feet of another, I hope I can say, "I am your humble servant:" but if it mean one who is in all respects as humble as he could wish, God forbid I should arrogate to myself so proud a title! In what can I say, *I have already attained?* Only I love my Divine Master, and I would not have a thought in my heart, that he should disapprove. I feel a sweetness in being assuredly in his gracious hand, which all the world cannot possibly afford; and which I really think, would make me happier in a dark dungeon, than ten thousand worlds could make me without it. And therefore, I love every creature on earth that bears his image. And I do not expose those, who, through ignorance, rashness, or prejudice, have greatly injured me."

June 16, 1747, the fourth conference was held in London. It consisted of four clergymen and two lay-preachers. In this year Methodism began in Ireland, in the city of Dublin, where Mr. Thomas Williams went and preached in the streets with great success. Mr. Wesley also went over in August, and continued to visit Ireland every two or three years till he died.



The Wesleyan Academy, at Kingswood, near Bristol.

Kingswood School opened—Persecution at Cork.

June 22, 1748, the fifth conference was held in Bristol. It cannot be gathered with certainty, either from Mr. Wesley's Journals, or any other source of information, that there was a conference every year from this time till 1763; and yet it appears that in some of those years there were two conferences. Mr. Wesley's Journal does not say whether there was any conference in 1749, but it has been asserted, there was one, and that it was held in London, beginning August 20th. But if so, it does not appear to have been a very interesting one, as there is no record of the proceedings.

This year Kingswood school was opened, for the education of preachers' children and others; though now it is wholly confined to the former. One circumstance respecting the erection of Kingswood School deserves to be had in lasting remembrance. Mr. Wesley happening to mention to Lady Maxwell, who resided in the neighbourhood of Bristol, his intention to build a school, which should be conducted upon a plan truly Christian, she immediately presented him with bank-notes to the amount of 500*l.* and requested him to proceed immediately, which he accordingly did. After some time, she asked how the building was going on, and whether he stood in need of any further assistance? Truth obliged him to acknowledge, that he had expended on it what she before gave him, and was now 300*l.* in debt, but withal that she would not consider herself as under any obligation in the business. Instantly, however, she retired, and brought him the sum he was in debt.

In February, 1750, a riotous and cruel persecution commenced against the Methodists in the city of Cork. The mob was headed by one Butler, a ballad-singer, who was secretly encouraged by some of the magistrates. The grand jury, at the assizes, presented Mr. Charles Wesley, seven travelling preachers, and Mr. Sullivan,

Persecution of the Methodists at Wednesbury.

who received the preachers into his house in Cork, as persons of ill-fame, and prayed that they might be transported. But the judge dismissed them all, in the most honourable manner, without attempting to try them.

In giving a history of the Methodists, however brief, something more may be thought necessary to be said concerning the persecutions they have endured. And it may be observed, that all persecution does not consist in acts of violence. A man may be persecuted by being slandered, defamed, and degraded. Of this species of persecution, Mr. Wesley, and his adherents, have had as great a portion, as perhaps ever was the lot of any people upon earth. And though they are now better known, and the prejudices of many are removed, or at least softened, yet it may still be said with great truth, "As for this sect it is every where spoken against." But the Methodists are neither surprised nor dismayed with this: rather, they consider it as an evidence of their being the people of God. They remember the words of their Saviour, who said, "Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you!" and "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile, and persecute, and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely." They know that as long as the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent have an existence on earth, there will be enmity between them; and that "they who are after the flesh, will persecute them who are after the spirit." This persecuting spirit has frequently produced acts of violence against the Methodists. One very remarkable instance of this was at Wednesbury in Staffordshire.

In 1743, a riotous mob committed acts of outrage and cruelty, for several days together, and were encouraged so to do by the magistrates. Men, pregnant women, and even children, were knocked down, and abused with

Mr. Wesley ill-treated by a mob at Darlaston.

savage fury. Houses were stripped of their furniture, vast quantities of goods were carried off, feather-beds were cut in pieces and the feathers strewed in the streets. They broke open houses, pulled off some of the roofs, and destroyed many windows. A reverend gentleman said to the mob at Darlaston, after they had committed these outrages, "Well, my lads, he that has done it *out of pure zeal for the Church*, I do not blame. But, my lads, I hope you will let us *settle our affairs in our own parish ourselves*; nevertheless if these men should come, then *your help will be needful*." During all this, none of the neighbouring magistrates would exert their authority to quell these mobs, or protect the Methodists. And when Mr. John Wesley came into that country, the Darlaston mob beset the house in which he was, crying, "Bring out the minister." After some time he went out and said, "Here I am; what do you want with me?" They said, "To go with us to the justice." He told them, "That I will, with all my heart." So he walked before, and two or three hundred of them followed after, first to one justice, and then to another; but the justices made excuses, and would not be seen. Possibly one principal reason for this was, they knew the mob had no real accusation to bring against Mr. Wesley, and therefore an appearance before a justice, must have ended in his release and the dispersion of the rioters. When this mob began to disperse, he fell into the hands of another, from Walsal, which came pouring in like a flood. They dragged him along, and when he attempted to go into a house, they pulled him back by the hair of the head, into the midst of the mob, who were as so many roaring lions. At length he was delivered, and received far less injury than might have been expected; so wonderfully did Providence watch over and defend him.

A man of the name of Thomas Beard, against whom

John Nelson pressed for a soldier—Government orders justice to be done.

no crime was alleged, but that of being a Methodist, was pressed, and dragged away from his family, and marched to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, through fatigue and abusive treatment he fell sick of a fever. He was sent to the hospital, where he was bled; his arm mortified, and was cut off; and in two or three days he died.

About the same time, John Nelson was pressed for a soldier, and marched along with the army for many weeks; he was sometimes confined in a dungeon, and all this for no other crime, real or pretended, but that he was a Methodist.

The first effectual check that was given to this mobbing, was in London. Sir John Ganson, chairman of the Middlesex justices, waited on Mr. Wesley, in the name of his brethren, to say, That the justices had orders from the government, to do him and his friends justice, whenever they should apply; his Majesty being determined, that no man in his dominions should be persecuted for conscience sake. This reflects great honour upon the sovereign. But it was become absolutely necessary that something should be done to quell the increasing tumults; and of this, even the enemies of the Methodists were made sensible. In Staffordshire, the mob turned upon their employers, and threatened, unless they gave them money, to serve them as they had done the Methodists. And if they saw a stranger, who had the appearance of a Methodist, they immediately attacked him.

A Quaker happening to ride through Wednesbury, they swore he was a preacher; pulled him off his horse, dragged him to a coal-pit, and were with difficulty prevented from throwing him in. But he prosecuted them at the assizes, and from that time the tumults in Staffordshire subsided.

The Methodists, after some years of persecution and oppression, having gained a few trials at the assizes, now

Persecution at Great Bradfield in Essex.

began to be more peremptory in demanding justice. But at the quarter-sessions they were frequently disappointed. However, they traversed and appealed to the higher courts; were often successful at the assizes, and almost always at the King's Bench. At length, it became understood, that the Methodists had a right to liberty and protection, as well as their fellow-subjects, and that they were determined to claim these privileges. However, a little while before the death of Mr. Wesley, attempts were made in some parts of the kingdom to prosecute them under the Conventicle Act. But this was a measure so shocking to the candid and liberal part of the public, that it was soon abandoned, even by those whose spirit and principles were the most intolerant.

In the year 1793, there was an outrageous and unprovoked persecution at Great Bradfield, in Essex, for which several persons were tried before Judge Lawrence, at Chelmsford, in May, 1794; when the cause of religious liberty triumphed over the spirit of persecution. There is much excellence in the laws of England, and perhaps nothing is so pure among us, as the administration of justice at the assizes.

It would be impossible, especially in the limits prescribed to this history, to give a full and explicit view of the persecution, endured by the Methodists. A biographical account of the preachers, written by themselves, would have contributed most effectually to this. Some of them have written short accounts of themselves, which were published in the first volumes of the Arminian Magazine. These give us many tragical accounts of the dangers to which they have been exposed, and the cruelties they have endured from savage bigotry and misguided zeal. Not a few persecutors, however, have been brought, like Saul of Tarsus, to preach, and many more to embrace, the faith they once persecuted.

Mr. Wesley visits Scotland—his marriage.

What still awaits the Methodists they know not. Flesh and blood could pray to be excused from persecution. But steady, well-grounded faith, producing love to God, and a good hope of heaven, will not shrink from, or faint in, any tribulation or distress for the sake of Christ.

This year, 1750, the seventh conference was held in Bristol. Mr. John Jane, one of the first Methodist preachers, died during this year. Another of the preachers sent Mr. Wesley the following account of his death: "John Jane was never well after walking from Epworth to Hainton, on an exceeding hot day, which threw him into a fever: but he was in great peace and love, even to those who greatly wanted love to him. He talked daily of the things of God. He was never without the love of God; spent much time in private prayer; and joined in prayer with the person in whose house he was, several times a day. On Friday, August the 24th, growing, as he thought, stronger in body, he sat in the evening by the fire-side: about six o'clock, he fetched a deep sigh, and never spoke more. He lived till the same hour the next day, and then, without any struggle, or sign of pain, with a smile on his face, he passed away. His last words were, 'I find the love of God in Christ Jesus.' All his clothes, linen and woollen, stockings, hat, and wig, are not thought sufficient to answer his funeral expenses, which amount to 1*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.* All the money he had was 1*s.* 4*d.*"

The eighth conference was held in the same place, in 1751. In the spring of this year, Mr. Wesley paid his first visit to Scotland, accompanied by Mr. Christopher Hopper. In this year also, the first disputes arose in the societies, concerning the propriety or impropriety of separating from the Church of England.

This year, (1751) Mr. Wesley was married to a Mrs. Vizelle, a widow of some property, who had two children

Mrs. Wesley leaves her husband—her death.

by her former husband; a son and a daughter. Her property being secured to herself, she left it, at her decease, to her son, amounting to about 5000*l.* and to Mr. Wesley she left a ring. "For many years," says he, "I remained single, because I believed I could be more useful in a single than in a married state. And I praise God, who enabled me so to do. I now as fully believed, that in my present circumstances, I might be more useful in a married state." His marriage, however, was not what is commonly called a happy one. This arose, probably, at least in some degree, from his peculiar situation with respect to the great work in which he was engaged. It was agreed between him and Mrs. Wesley, previous to marriage, that he should not preach one sermon, or travel one mile the less on her account. But it was not long before she wished to confine him to a more domestic life: and when she found this to be impossible, she gave place to jealousy. This soured, and irritated her temper, and was productive of many outrages. After repeatedly leaving his house, and being brought back by his earnest importunities, she took her final departure, and left word that she would never return. After behaving in this way, it is no wonder he should laconically say, "I have not left her; I have not put her away; nor will I invite her back again." She died about nine years before him, and a stone was placed at the head of her grave, in Camberwell Church-yard, representing her as "a person of piety, a tender parent, and a sincere friend."

October 16, 1752, the ninth conference was held in Bristol, when it was first determined, that the preachers should each have a salary of twelve pounds a year, to provide themselves clothes, books, &c. Their food was provided for them where they laboured. Few men are

Mr. Wesley taken ill—writes his notes on the New Testament.

more straitened and embarrassed in their circumstances than some preachers sometimes have been. It is well that God knows their wants.

May 22, 1753, the tenth conference began in Leeds. All the former annual conferences were held either in London or Bristol. About thirty preachers were present upon this occasion, who were nearly the whole of the preachers at that time.

Till now, Mr. Wesley had enjoyed remarkably good health. But in October, 1753, he was seized with a consumptive disorder, which brought him near death. After trying other expedients, he went to the Hot-Wells, near Bristol, to enjoy the benefit of those medicinal springs. Here he spent about four months. But though unable to travel, or preach, he would not be inactive, but began to write his notes on the New Testament; "a work," says he, "which I should scarcely ever have attempted, had I not been so ill as not to be able to travel or preach, and yet so well as to be able to read and write."

When in the most dangerous stage of this affliction, he received the following letter from the Rev. George Whitefield.

Bristol, Dec. 3, 1753.

"Rev. and very dear Sir,

"If seeing you so weak, when leaving London, distressed me, the news and prospect of your approaching dissolution, hath quite weighed me down. I pity myself, and the church, but not you; a radiant throne awaits you, and ere long you will enter into your Master's joy: yonder he stands with a massy crown, ready to put it on your head, amidst an admiring throng of saints and angels. But I, poor I, that have been waiting for my dissolution these nineteen years, must be left behind, to grovel here below! Well! this is my comfort: it cannot be long ere the chariots will be sent, even for worthless me.

Receives a letter from Mr. Whitefield—a breach between them.

“ If prayers can detain you, even you, Rev. and very dear Sir, shall not leave us : but if the decree is gone forth, that you must now fall asleep in Jesus, may he kiss your soul away, and give you to die in the embraces of triumphant love ! If in the land of the dying, I hope to pay my last respects to you next week. If not, Rev. and very dear Sir, F-a-r-e-w-e-ll. *Ego sequar, etsi non passibus æquis.** My heart is too big, tears trickle down too fast, and you are, I fear, too weak for me to enlarge. Underneath you may there be Christ’s everlasting arms ! I commend you to his never-failing mercy, and am,

Rev. and very dear Sir,

Your most affectionate, sympathizing,

And afflicted younger brother,

In the Gospel of our common Lord,

G. WHITEFIELD.”

It may be proper to remark here, that for a considerable time, after the commencement of Methodism, Mr. Whitefield continued to labour in conjunction with Mr. Wesley and his brother Charles. But when Mr. Whitefield paid his second visit to America, he was much noticed, and became very intimate with many pious ministers, especially in the northern states, whose sentiments were Calvinistic. From admiring their piety, and reading their books, he began to relish their opinions. By their recommendation, he devoted much attention to the writings of the Puritans, and became so charmed with their manner and opinions, as to imbibe their peculiar tenets. Consequently, when he returned to England, Mr. Wesley and he could not so cordially unite as they had before done. Mr. Whitefield said to Mr. Wesley, “ You and I preach two different gospels : and therefore I will neither join you, nor give you the right hand of

* I shall follow, though not with equal steps.

Their friendship restored—a breach made in the connexion.

fellowship, but will preach against you and your brother, wheresoever I preach at all." However, though they both retained their sentiments, about the year 1754, their friendship and union seems to have been in some measure restored, so that they sometimes preached in each other's chapels; spoke of each other in the most respectful terms; and kept up an epistolary correspondence so long as Mr. Whitefield lived. Mr. Whitefield said in his will, "I leave a mourning-ring to my honoured and dear friends and disinterested fellow-labourers, the Rev. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them in heart and christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine."

"To prevent vile panegyric," in case he should then die, Mr. Wesley wrote the following epitaph, and ordered that this inscription, if any, should be placed on his tomb-stone:

Here lieth
The Body of JOHN WESLEY,
A brand plucked out of the burning:
Who died of a consumption in the fifty-first year of his age;
Not leaving, after his debts are paid, ten pounds behind him,
Praying,
God be merciful to me an unprofitable servant!

SECT. VII.

*Of the History of Methodism till the Conference in 1784,
and of the Deed of Declaration.*

MAY 22, 1754, the eleventh conference was held in London. During the preceding year, a breach had been made in the connexion, by Samuel Larwood, Jonathan Reeves, John Whitworth, Charles Skelton, and John Ed-

Reasons against a separation from the Church.

wards forming independent congregations, in different parts of England.

May 6, 1755, the twelfth conference began in Leeds. The *lawfulness* and *expediency* of separating from the Church, was seriously and calmly considered: and on the third day, they all fully agreed in the general conclusion, that whether it was *lawful* or not, it was in no wise *expedient*. This year the practice of renewing the covenant with God, was first begun by Mr. Wesley, in London.

August 26, 1756, the thirteenth conference, consisting of about fifty preachers, began in Bristol. They again considered the point about a separation, when Mr. Wesley, and his brother Charles, closed the conference, with a solemn declaration of their purpose, never to separate from the Church. And Mr. Wesley published the following reasons against separation from the Church of England.

“ Whether it be *lawful* or no (which itself may be disputed, being not so clear a point as some may imagine) it is by no means *expedient* for us to separate from the established church :

“ 1. Because it would be a contradiction to the solemn and repeated declarations which we have made in all manner of ways, in preaching, in print, and in private conversation :

“ 2. Because (on this as well as many other accounts) it would give huge occasion of offence to those who seek and desire occasion—to all the enemies of God and his truth :

“ 3. Because it would exceedingly prejudice against us many who fear, yea, who love God, and thereby hinder their receiving so much, perhaps any farther, benefit from our preaching :

Reasons against a separation from the Church.

“ 4. Because it would hinder multitudes of those who neither love nor fear God, from hearing us at all :

“ 5. Because it would occasion many hundreds, if not some thousands of those who are now united with us, to separate from us ; yea, and some of those who have a deep work of grace in their souls :

“ 6. Because it would be throwing balls of wild fire among them that are now quiet in the land. We are now sweetly united together in love. We mostly think and speak the same thing. But this would occasion inconceivable strife and contention, between those who left, and those who remained in the church, as well as between those who left us, and those who remained with us : nay, and between those very persons who remained, as they were variously inclined one way or the other :

“ 7. Because, whereas controversy is now asleep, and we in great measure live peaceably with all men, so that we are strangely at leisure to spend our whole time and strength in enforcing plain, practical, vital religion, (O what would many of our forefathers have given, to have enjoyed so blessed a calm ?) this would utterly banish peace from among us, and that without hope of its return. It would engage me for one, in a thousand controversies, both in public and private ; (for I should be in conscience obliged to give the reasons of my conduct, and to defend those reasons against all opposers) and so take me off from those more useful labours, which might otherwise employ the short remainder of my life :

“ 8. Because to form the plan of a new church would require infinite time and care, (which might be far more profitably bestowed) with much more wisdom and greater depth and extensiveness of thought, than any of us are master of :

“ 9. Because, from some having barely entertained a distant thought of this, evil fruits have already followed,

The same subject continued.

such as prejudice against the clergy in general; and aptness to believe ill of them; contempt (not without a degree of bitterness), of clergymen as such, and a sharpness of language toward the whole order, utterly unbecoming either gentlemen or Christians.

“ 10. Because the experiment has been so frequently tried already, and the success never answered the expectation. God has since the reformation raised up from time to time many witnesses of pure religion. If these lived and died (like John Arndt, Robert Bolton, and many others) in the churches to which they belonged, notwithstanding the wickedness which overflowed both the teachers and people therein; they spread the leaven of true religion far and wide, and were more and more useful, till they went to paradise. But if, upon any provocation or consideration whatever, they separated, and founded distinct parties, their influence was more and more confined; they grew less and less useful to others, and generally lost the spirit of religion themselves in the spirit of controversy.

“ 11. Because we have melancholy instances of this, even now before our eyes. Many have, in our memory, left the Church, and formed themselves into distinct bodies. And certainly some of them, from a real persuasion, that they should do God more service. But have any separated themselves and prospered? Have they been either more holy, or more useful than they were before?

“ 12. Because, by such a separation, we should not only throw away the peculiar glorying which God has given us, that we do and will suffer all things for our brethren's sake, though the more we love them, the less we be loved; but should act in direct contradiction to that very end, for which we believe God hath raised us up. The chief design of his providence in sending us

Allowance first made to preachers' wives.

out, is undoubtedly, to quicken our brethren. And the first message of all our preachers is, to the lost sheep of the Church of England. Now would it not be a flat contradiction to this design, to separate from the Church? These things being considered, we cannot apprehend (whether it be lawful in itself or no), that it is lawful for us: were it only on this ground, that it is by no means expedient.

“ Lastly, Whereas we are surrounded on every side by those who are equally enemies to us and to the Church of England; and whereas these are long practised in this war, and skilled in all the objections against it; while our brethren on the other hand are quite strangers to them all, and so on a sudden know not how to answer them: it is highly expedient for every preacher to be provided with sound answers to those objections, and then to instruct the societies where he labours, how to defend themselves against those assaults: that they may *no more be tost to and fro by every wind of doctrine*; but being settled in one mind and one judgment, by solid scriptural and rational arguments, *may grow up in all things into him who is our head, even Jesus Christ.*

“ JOHN WESLEY.”

In 1757, there were two conferences held; one at Keighley, May 21, between Mr. Wesley and the preachers in that neighbourhood; and the regular annual conference, which began August 4, in London. We shall not number that held at Keighley, but call that held in London, the fourteenth conference. It was a time of love and harmony. At this time, a fixed allowance was first made to preachers' wives, of the annual sum of ten pounds; which would go further then, than twenty pounds will now. Mrs. Mather was the first who received it.

Proceedings of the Conference—Revival of religion in London.

August 10, 1758, and following days, the fifteenth conference was held in Bristol. Mr. Wesley gives no other description of it, except that "it began and concluded in perfect harmony." We learn, however, from his "*Plain Account of Christian Perfection*," that some of the time was employed in considering that subject. The conclusion was expressed in these words. "1. Every man may mistake as long as he lives. 2. A mistake in *opinion* may occasion a mistake in *practice*. 3. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. 4. Every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. 5. It follows, that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their actual transgressions, and may say for themselves, as well as for their brethren, *Forgive us our trespasses*."

August 8, 1759, the sixteenth conference began in London; and was remarkable for a strict inquiry into the spirit and lives of the preachers.

August 29, 1760, the seventeenth conference began in Bristol. This year was remarkable for a great revival of religion in London, and elsewhere; especially on account of a great number of persons, who professed to be cleansed from all unrighteousness, or to be made perfect in love. But it was disgraced by some of those, following impulses more than the bible; using irreverent expressions in prayer; pretending to the gift of discernment of spirits, and of foretelling future events; and in pronouncing uncharitable and harsh censures against those who disapproved of their enthusiasm. The connexion was, by this means, much disturbed; and two or three years after, a considerable number of the society in London, left Mr. Wesley, with Mr. Maxfield and George Bell at their head.

September 1, 1761, the eighteenth conference began in London. At this time the work of God mightily increased: and there was also an increase of what was not justifiable. Mr. Wesley laboured hard, to guard the people against extremes on both sides, and in some measure succeeded. His religious sentiments were both rational and scriptural; and he was always an enemy to rant and enthusiasm.

1762. This year the nineteenth conference was held in Leeds, beginning on the 9th of August. God was graciously present, and it was a profitable season. During this year, there was a considerable revival of religion in Ireland, particularly in Dublin. Mr. Wesley says, "The person by whom chiefly it had pleased God to work this wonderful work, was John Manners, a plain man, of middling sense, and not eloquent, but rather rude in speech: one who had never before been remarkably useful, but seemed to be raised up for this single work: and as soon as it was done, he fell into a consumption, languished awhile, and died." I would just remark, that Mr. John Manners was buried in the church-yard, in St. Saviour's-gate, in York; and that Mr. John Shaw, an itinerant preacher for many years; and latterly, Mr. Alexander Mather, are interred in the same grave. Mr. Manners informed Mr. Wesley, that during this gracious revival in Dublin, some were justified, or sanctified, almost every day; that the people were all on fire; and that the work was continually increasing. When Mr. Wesley visited Dublin, he found Mr. Manners had not at all exceeded the truth, in the plain, unadorned accounts which he had sent him.

In July, 1763, the twentieth conference was held in London. The resolutions of former conferences, respecting discipline, were now published. The design and state of Kingswood School were drawn up. The *deed of*

Account of the Jumpers in Wales.

trust was prepared by three eminent lawyers; and it was agreed earnestly to request *all* the societies to contribute to the yearly collection, which hitherto had only been made in a *few* of the societies. The number of the circuits, at this time, was in England, 20; in Scotland, 2; in Wales, 2; in Ireland, 7. Total, 31. The *preachers' fund*, was instituted this year.

It will give the reader a clear and interesting view of Mr. Wesley's opinion of noisy and irregular meetings for religious exercises, to transcribe a part of his journal for August 27, 1763.

"Mr. Evans," says he, "gave me an account, from his own knowledge, of what has made a great noise in Wales." 'It is common in the congregations, attended by Mr. W. W. and one or two other clergymen, after the preaching is over, for any one that had a mind, to give out a verse of a hymn. This they sing over and over with all their might, perhaps above thirty, yea, forty times. Mean while, the bodies of two or three, sometimes ten or twelve, are violently agitated; and they leap up and down, in all manner of postures, frequently for hours together.' Mr. Wesley adds, "I think it needs no penetration to understand this. They are honest, upright men, who really feel the love of God in their hearts; but they have little experience, either of the ways of God, or of the devices of Satan. So he serves himself of their simplicity, in order to wear them out, and bring a discredit on the work of God."

August 16, 1764, the twenty-first conference began in Bristol. Twelve clergymen made their appearance at this conference, to endeavour to prevail upon Mr. Wesley to give up the societies under his care to the superintendence of those ministers in every place, who were pious and who preached the gospel. Mr. Charles Wesley, who ceased to travel in 1757, and settled in Bristol,

Mr. Wesley to Mrs. Fletcher on female preaching.

united with them. Mr. John Wesley, however, could not see the propriety of this ; but resisted their importunity, and the preachers unanimously concurred with him.

On the 20th of August, 1765, the twenty-second conference began at Manchester ; many subjects were discussed, and among the rest, the subject of female preaching. I cannot deny myself, and the reader, the pleasure of inserting a letter from Mr. Wesley to Miss Bosanquet, now Mrs. Fletcher, upon this delicate and controverted subject.

“ *Londonderry, June 13, 1771.*

“ My dear Sister,

“ I think the strength of the cause rests there, in your having an extraordinary call. So I am persuaded has every one of our lay-preachers : otherwise, I could not countenance their preaching at all. It is plain to me, that the whole work of God termed Methodism, is an extraordinary dispensation of his providence. Therefore I do not wonder, if several things occur therein, which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul’s ordinary rule of discipline was, “ I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation,” yet in extraordinary cases, he made a few exceptions, at Corinth in particular.

“ I am, my dear sister, your affectionate brother,

“ J. WESLEY.”

August 12, 1766, the twenty-third conference was held in Leeds. “ A happier one,” says Mr. Wesley, “ we never had, nor a more profitable one. It both began and ended in love, and with a solemn sense of the presence of God.”

August 18, 1767, the twenty-fourth conference began in London. It was a pleasant time, and Mr. Whitefield attended the two last days ; also many stewards and

Methodism introduced into America by Capt. Webb.

local preachers. At this conference the members in society in the different circuits, first began to be published. They stood as follows :

	<i>Circuits.</i>	<i>Preachers.</i>	<i>Members.</i>
In England,	25	75	22,410
In Ireland,	9	19	2,801
In Scotland,	5	7	468
In Wales,	1	3	232
Total,	40	104	25,911

At this conference it was determined that quarterly and occasional Fasts should be observed in the different circuits ; and much was said against Smuggling, as well as Bribery at elections of members of parliament.

In August, 1768, the twenty-fifth conference was held in Bristol. It seems the harvest appeared to be great, and the labourers comparatively few. It was resolved, that no travelling preacher should carry on a trade ; and this resolution was renewed and strengthened at the conference in 1770, and again in 1804.

August 1, 1769, the twenty-sixth conference commenced in Leeds. The preachers had the pleasure of being informed that Methodism had begun to take root in the vast continent of America. A preaching-house had been built at New York, and a cry was heard, " Come over and help us." Mr. Richard Boardman and Mr. Joseph Pillmoor willingly offered themselves for this service, and took a present in their hands of fifty pounds as a token of brotherly love. Methodism had its first introduction into America by certain persons who had emigrated thither from England and Ireland, assisted by Lieutenant (commonly called Captain) Webb, who was then in New York with the army ; he preached there and at Philadelphia with great zeal and success. In 1771, Mr.

Certain propositions in the Minutes give offence to the Calvinists ;

Francis Asbury, who has proved so great and distinguished an ornament to the church, was sent thither by Mr. Wesley and the conference. He now presides, under the character of Bishop, over all the Methodists in the United States ; a country not less than 1,300 miles in length, and 500 in breadth. May he not be said to have the largest See of any bishop in the world ? yet many curates have larger salaries.

In August, 1770, the twenty-seventh conference was held in London. From this time, the preachers' wives, who derived support from the connexion, had their names, together with the circuit that was to give them the allowance, mentioned in the printed Minutes.—Certain propositions inserted in the Minutes of this year, gave great offence to the Calvinists ; and some champions among them blew the trumpet in Sion, and invited all their brethren to go forth in battle-array, and *insist* upon Mr. Wesley's recanting what he had thus published. The offensive propositions were these :

“ Take heed to your doctrine. We said, in 1744, ‘ We have leaned too much towards Calvinism ;’ Wherein ?

1. With regard to *man's faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression. And we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, on his authority, that if a man is not *faithful in the unrighteous mammon*, God will not *give him the true riches*.
2. With regard to *working for life*. This also our Lord has expressly commanded us. *Labour, (ergazesthe) literally, work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life*. And in fact every believer, till he comes to glory, works *for* as well as *from* life.
3. We have received it as a maxim, that, ‘ A man is to do nothing, in order to Justification ;’ nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God, should *cease from evil and learn to do well*. So God himself teaches by the prophet Isaiah.

The offensive propositions stated.

Whoever repents, should do *works meet for repentance*. And if this is not *in order* to find favour, what does he do them for.

“ Review the whole affair. 1. Who of us is now accepted of God? He that now believes in Christ, with a loving and obedient heart. 2. But who among those that never heard of Christ? He that feareth God and worketh righteousness, according to the light he has. 3. Is this the same with, ‘He that is sincere?’ Nearly, if not quite.

“ 4. Is not this ‘Salvation by works?’ Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition*. 5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years? I am afraid *about words*, (namely in some of the foregoing instances.) 6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid, we are rewarded, *according* to our works, yea, *because of our works*. How does this differ from *for the sake of our works*? And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*, as our works *deserve*? Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.

“ 7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions, is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those, who by their own confession, neither feared God nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the general rule? It is a doubt whether God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own saying so is not proof: for we know how all that are convinced of sin, undervalue themselves in every respect.

“ 8. Does not talking, without proper caution, of a justified or a sanctified *state*, tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, *according to our works*.

The propositions opposed—Mr. Shirley's circular letter.

According to the whole of our inward tempers, and outward behaviour."

These propositions roused Lady Huntingdon, and other zealous Calvinists, to make a vigorous opposition, and the Rev. Walter Shirley, chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon, in the name and on the behalf of the party, wrote the following circular letter, of which a copy was sent to the principal Calvinists, clergy and laity, in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

" SIR,

" Whereas Mr. Wesley's conference is to be held at Bristol, on Tuesday, the 6th of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon, and many other Christian friends, (real Protestants) to have a meeting at Bristol, at the same time, of such principal persons, both clergy and laity, who disapprove of the underwritten Minutes; and as the same are thought injurious to the very fundamental principles of Christianity; it is further proposed, that they go in a body to the said conference, and insist upon a formal recantation of the said Minutes; and in case of a refusal, that they sign and publish their protest against them. Your presence, Sir, on this occasion, is particularly requested: but if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject to such person as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you, whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a dreadful heresy, to recommend it to as many of your Christian Friends, as well of the Dissenters as of the Established Church, as you can prevail on to be there, the cause being of so public a nature.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WALTER SHIRLEY."

The obnoxious propositions vindicated by Mr. Fletcher.

P. S. Your answer is desired, directed to the Countess of Huntingdon, or the Rev. Mr. Shirley, or John Lloyd, Esq. in Bath ; or Mr. James Ireland, merchant, Bristol ; or to Thomis Powis, Esq. at Berwick, near Shrewsbury ; or to Richard Hill, Esq. at Hawkstone, near Whitchurch, Shropshire. Lodgings will be provided. Enquire at Mr. Ireland's, Bristol."

That most excellent man, the late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, vicar of Madeley, became the vindicator of Mr. Wesley, and of the obnoxious propositions ; and he did it to perfection, to the establishment and joy of Mr. Wesley's friends, and the confusion and discomfiture of his opponents. His arguments are so clear, the testimonies adduced from the Fathers in favour of universal redemption are so strong, and the beauties of his manner are so numerous, that a Calvinist said, " If I read Mr. Fletcher's writings, I shall be of his mind."

Mr. Wesley was warmly opposed by Messrs. Richard and Rowland Hill, and others. Here began a controversy, which occasioned Mr. Fletcher to write his Five Checks to Antinomianism, and some other admirable productions, which the reader, for his edification and pleasure, should not fail to obtain and explore. The controversy embraced the whole of the Five Points, which generally distinguish Arminianism from Calvinism.

Mr. Fletcher died, regretted by the church, and lamented by the world, August 14, 1785, in the 56th year of his illustrious life.

The twenty-eighth conference begun, August the 6th, 1771, at Bristol. Respecting this conference, Mr. Wesley says in his Journal, " we had more preachers than usual, in consequence of Mr. Shirley's circular letter. At ten on Thursday morning, he came with nine or ten of

his friends. We conversed freely for about two hours. And I believe they were satisfied, that we were not such dreadful heretics as they imagined, but were tolerably sound in the faith." However, several of the following years were remarkable, and in one sense afflicting, on account of the controversy that was so warmly carried on between Mr. Wesley's vindicators and opposers. But truth is great, and will prevail.

The twenty-ninth conference was held at Leeds, in the beginning of August, 1772. The next conference, the thirtieth, was held in London: and the thirty-first in 1774, was held in Bristol. At these three conferences nothing very interesting occurred.

In 1775, a local preacher of Liverpool, Mr. John Crook, was induced to visit the Isle of Man, with a view to introduce Methodism there. He was favoured with extraordinary success. Methodism, or in other words, true religion, has had a general, and very beneficial influence upon the inhabitants of that isle. More than two thousand people presently joined the society, and the number has not diminished.

In August, 1775, the thirty-second conference was held in Leeds. Complaints from different quarters intimated that many of the preachers had neither grace nor gifts sufficient to qualify them for the work of the ministry. But after a full and close examination of the subject, the general opinion was, that those charges were without sufficient foundation.

The thirty-third conference began in London, August the 6th, 1776. This was a conference remarkable for a strict examination of the preachers, as to their gifts, graces, and usefulness. The result was, that one was excluded for insufficiency, and two for improper behaviour. One hundred and fifty travelling preachers was the number then employed in Great Britain and Ireland.

Arminian Magazine first published—first conference in Dublin.

In August, this year, Dr. Coke joined Mr. Wesley, who after a most active life, finished his course, going to establish a mission at Ceylon, May the 3rd, 1814.

In August, 1777, the thirty-fourth conference was held in Bristol. It seems it had been very generally represented, that the Methodists were a fallen people. Mr. Wesley inquired very minutely into this subject at the conference, and was fully convinced, that they did not decrease, but increase, both in grace and number. John Hilton, however, left the connexion, because the Methodists, as he said, were a fallen people, and joined the Quakers. At this conference, Mr. Wesley began to record in the annual Minutes, those preachers who had died in the year preceding.

On the 1st of January, 1778, Mr. Wesley published the first number of the *Arminian Magazine*. He continued to publish a number every month so long as he lived; and the conference has continued to do the same since his death. It has a vast circulation, and has been of great use in spreading every branch of sacred knowledge, and in being a monthly mirror to the whole connexion.

In August, 1778, the thirty-fifth conference was held in Leeds.

August the 3rd, 1779, the thirty-sixth conference commenced its sittings in London.

The thirty-seventh conference began in Bristol, on the 1st. of August, 1780. At this time the Large Minutes, containing the whole of our discipline, were revised and confirmed.

At the usual time, in 1781, the thirty-eighth conference was held in Leeds.

In July, 1782, Dr. Coke, being delegated by Mr. Wesley, held a conference in Dublin. This has been annually continued ever since, and the Doctor has been almost

The Deed of Declaration executed by Mr. Wesley.

always the president. It has been of great advantage to the Irish Methodists.

August the 6th, 1782, the thirty-ninth conference began in London.

July 29, 1783, the fortieth conference began in Bristol. The preachers were duly impressed with the importance of having all our chapels so settled, that they could not be applied to any other purpose, than those for which they were built. Dr. Coke endured much labour and reproach in forwarding this important object; though he had some success, it was by no means equal to his wishes, nor what might have been expected.

February 28, 1784, Mr. Wesley executed the well-known Deed of Declaration, constituting one hundred preachers, whom he mentioned by name, "The Conference of the People called Methodists." This instrument was enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery. The design was so to explain the phrase, "The Conference of the People called Methodists," that the trustees might not be able to alienate chapels from the purpose for which they were built, and that the Conference only might possess the power of appointing preachers. But when the forty-first conference met in Leeds, in July, 1784, it was found that the Deed of Declaration had produced unpleasant consequences, as it had given great offence to four or five preachers, whose names were not inserted in it, while many of their juniors, and perhaps their inferiors in some respects, had that honour. By the influence of Mr. Fletcher, a temporary peace was patched up. But it was not long before the two Hampsons quitted the connexion, the father becoming an independent minister at Tunbridge Wells, and the son obtained episcopal ordination, and a living in Sunderland.

To throw light upon the subject, I will here insert a copy of the Deed of Declaration, accompanied by Dr.

Dr. Coke's Address to the Methodist Societies.

Coke's account of its origin, written by the Doctor not a year before Mr. Wesley's death.

I would only remark, that but about thirty of the hundred are now alive, and not one half of these able to take circuits: "So soon passeth it away, and we are gone."

An Address to the Methodist Society in Great Britain and Ireland, on the Settlement of the Preaching-Houses. By Thomas Coke, LL. D.

MY DEAREST BRETHREN,

It has long been the grief of my mind, that any thing should exist among us which gives much uneasiness to many of you, and will, if it be suffered to continue among us, be a ground for perpetual dissatisfaction, to the great hindrance of the work of God; I mean the power given to the Conference, by the present mode of settling our preaching-houses.

I have opened my sorrowful mind at large to several of the most judicious of our preachers, men who have borne the heat and burden of the day; men of renown in our Israel; and they have with one voice advised me to lay before you this present plan of reconciliation.

For this purpose, I shall, in the first place, relate to you the several steps by which the general deed, which was enrolled in Chancery by our dear honoured father in the gospel Mr. Wesley, was set on foot, and afterwards completed. I shall, secondly, present to you a copy of the general deed itself, with annotations.

Of the several steps by which the general Deed was set on foot, and at last completed.

In the conference held in the year 1782, several complaints were made in respect to the danger in which we were situated, from the want of specifying in distinct and

Dr. Coke's Address to the Methodist Societies,

legal terms what was meant by the term, "The Conference of the people called Methodists." Indeed the preachers seemed universally alarmed, and many expressed their fears that divisions would take place among us after the death of Mr. Wesley on this account. And the whole body of preachers present seemed to wish, that some methods might be taken to remove this danger, which appeared to be pregnant with evils of the first magnitude.

In consequence of this (the subject lying heavy on my mind), I desired Mr. Clulow, of Chancery Lane, London, to draw up such a case as I should judge sufficient for the purpose, and then to present it to that very eminent counsellor Mr. Maddox, for his opinion. This was accordingly done; and Mr. Maddox informed us in his answer, that the deeds of our preaching-houses were in the situation we dreaded; that the law would not recognize the conference in the state in which it stood at that time; and, consequently, that there was no central point which might preserve the connexion from splitting into a thousand pieces after the death of Mr. Wesley. To prevent this, he observed that Mr. Wesley should enrol a deed in Chancery, which deed should specify the persons by name who composed the conference, together with the mode of succession for its perpetuity; and, at the same time, such regulations be established by the deed, as Mr. Wesley would wish the conference should be governed by after his death.

This opinion of Mr. Maddox I read in the conference held in the year 1783. The whole conference seemed grateful to me for procuring the opinion; and expressed their wishes that such a deed might be drawn up, and executed by Mr. Wesley, as should agree with the advice of that great lawyer, as soon as possible.

Soon after the conference was ended, Mr. Wesley

on the settlement of the Preaching-houses.

authorized me to draw up, with the assistance of Mr. Clulow, all the leading parts of a deed, which should answer the above-mentioned purposes. This we did with much care; and, as to myself, I can truly say, with fear and trembling, receiving Mr. Maddox's advice in respect to every step we took, and laying the whole ultimately at Mr. Wesley's feet for his approbation. There remained nothing now but to insert the names of those who were to constitute the conference. Mr. Wesley then declared, that he would limit the number to one hundred. This was indeed contrary to my very humble opinion; which was, that every preacher in full connexion should be a member of the conference; and I still believe, it will be most for the glory of God, and the peace of our Zion, that the members of the conference admit the other preachers who are in full connexion, and are present at the conferences from time to time, to a full vote on all occasions.* However, of course, I submitted to the superior judgment and authority of Mr. Wesley. But I do publicly avow, that I was not concerned in the limitation of the number, or the selection of the hundred preachers who were nominated the members of the conference.

All things necessary being completed in the Court of Chancery, according to law, I thought it my duty to send copies of the deed to all assistants of circuits throughout Great Britain, and afterwards carried copies of it to Ireland.

* My sentiments are precisely the same with those of Dr. Coke as here expressed. But this is now the established rule of conference, except in the choice of the president and secretary, and has been since the death of Mr. Wesley. And it is probable, the number of voters for the president and secretary will be augmented, at no distant period. This, I think, would produce important advantages to the connexion.

J. C.

Attested copy of the Deed of Declaration.

An attested Copy of the Rev. John Wesley's Declaration and Establishment of the Conference of the People called Methodists, enrolled in His Majesty's High Court of Chancery, with Annotations.

To all to whom these presents shall come, JOHN WESLEY, late of Lincoln-College, *Oxford*, but now of the *City-Road*, London, Clerk, sendeth greeting:

WHEREAS divers buildings commonly called chapels, with a messuage and dwelling-house, or other appurtenances to each of the same belonging, situate in various parts of Great Britain, have been given and conveyed, from time to time, by the said John Wesley to certain persons, and their heirs, in each of the said gifts and conveyances named, which are enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery, upon the acknowledgement of the said John Wesley, (pursuant to the Act of Parliament in that case made and provided,) UPON TRUST, that the trustees in the said several deeds respectively named, and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being to be elected, as in the said deeds is appointed, should permit and suffer the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as he should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, at all times during his life, at his will and pleasure, to have and enjoy the free use and benefit of the said premises, that he the said John Wesley, and such person or persons as he should nominate and appoint, might therein preach and expound God's holy word: And upon further trust, that the said respective trustees, and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, should permit and suffer Charles Wesley, brother of the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as the said Charles

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Wesley should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, in like manner, during his life—To have, use, and enjoy the said premises respectively for the like purposes aforesaid: and after the decease of the survivor of them, the said John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, then upon further trust, that the said respective trustees, and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being for ever, should permit and suffer such person and persons, and for such time and times as should be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists in London, Bristol, or Leeds, and no others, to have and enjoy the said premises for the purposes aforesaid:* and whereas divers persons have in like manner given, or conveyed, many chapels, with messuages and dwelling-houses, or other appurtenances to the same belonging, situate in various parts of Great Britain, and also in Ireland, to certain trustees in each of the said gifts and conveyances respectively named, upon the like trusts, and for the same uses and purposes as aforesaid, (except only that in some of the said gifts and conveyances, no life-estate, or other interest, is therein or thereby given and reserved to the said Charles Wesley :) and whereas, for rendering effectual the trusts created by the said several gifts or conveyances, and that no doubt or litigation may arise with respect unto the same, or interpretation and true meaning thereof, it has been thought expedient by the said John Wesley, on behalf of himself as donor of the several chapels, with the messuages, dwell-

* This is only a repetition of that part of the old Deed of Settlement which relates to the Trust. Nor does this Deed alter the old mode of settlement in any respect, but was merely designed to specify who were then the members of the Conference, how the succession should be preserved, and by what regulations the Conference should be governed.

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ing-houses, or appurtenances to the same belonging, given or conveyed to the like uses and trusts, to explain the words *yearly Conference of the people called Methodists*, contained in all the said trust-deeds, and to declare *what persons* are members of the said Conference, and how the *succession* and *identity* thereof is to be continued: *Now therefore these presents witness*, that, for accomplishing the aforesaid purposes, the said John Wesley doth hereby declare, that the Conference of the people called Methodists in London, Bristol, or Leeds, ever since there hath been any yearly Conference of the said people called Methodists, in any of the said places, hath always heretofore consisted of the preachers and expounders of God's holy word, commonly called Methodist Preachers, in connexion with, and under the care of the said John Wesley, whom he hath thought expedient, year after year, to summons to meet him, in one or other of the said places of London, Bristol, or Leeds, to advise with them for the promotion of the gospel of Christ, to appoint the said persons so summoned, and the other preachers and expounders of God's holy word, also in connexion with, and under the care of, the said John Wesley, not summoned to the said yearly Conference, to the use and enjoyment of the said chapels and premises so given and conveyed upon trust for the said John Wesley, and such other person and persons as he should appoint during his life as aforesaid; and for the expulsion of unworthy, and admission of new persons under his care, and into his connexion, to be preachers and expounders as aforesaid; and also of other persons upon trial for the like purposes: the names of all which persons so summoned by the said John Wesley, the persons appointed, with the chapels and premises to which they were so appointed, together with the duration of such appointments, and of those expelled, or admitted, into connexion, or upon

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trial, with all other matters transacted and done at the said yearly Conference, have year by year been printed and published under the title of Minutes of "Conference." *And these presents further witness,* and the said John Wesley doth hereby avouch and further declare, that the several persons herein afternamed, to wit, the said John Wesley and Charles Wesley; Thomas Coke, of the city of London, doctor of civil law, James Creighton, of the same place, clerk, Thomas Tenant, of the same place, Thomas Rankin, of the same place; Joshua Kighley, of Seven Oaks, in the county of Kent; James Wood, of Rochester, in the said county of Kent; John Booth, of Colchester, Thomas Cooper of the same place; Richard Whatcoat, of Norwich; Jeremiah Brettell, of Lynn, in the county of Norfolk, Jonathan Parkin, of the same place; Joseph Pescod, of Bedford; Christopher Watkins, of Northampton, John Barber, of the same place; John Broadbent, of Oxford, Joseph Cole, of the same place; Jonathan Cousens, of the city of Gloucester, John Brettell, of the same place; John Mason, of Salisbury, George Story, of the same place; Francis Wrigley, of St. Austell, in the county of Cornwall; William Green, of the city of Bristol; John Moon, of Plymouth-Dock, James Hall, of the same place; James Thom, of St. Austell aforesaid; Joseph Taylor, of Redruth, in the said county of Cornwall; William Hoskins, of Cardiff, Glamorganshire: John Leech, of Brecon, William Saunders, of the same place; Richard Rodda, of Birmingham; John Fenwick, of Burslem, Staffordshire, Thomas Hanby, of the same place; James Rogers, of Macclesfield, Samuel Bardsley, of the same place; John Murlin, of Manchester, William Percival, of the same place; Duncan Wright, of the city of Chester, John Goodwin, of the same place; Parson Greenwood, of Liverpool, Zachariah Udall, of the same place, Thomas Vasey, of the same place; Joseph Brad-

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ford, of Leicester, Jeremiah Robertshaw, of the same place; William Myles, of Nottingham; Thomas Longley, of Derby; Thomas Taylor, of Sheffield, William Simpson, of the same place; Thomas Carlill, of Grimsby, in the county of Lincoln, Robert Scott, of the same place, Joseph Harper, of the same place; Thomas Corbitt, of Gainsborough, in the said county of Lincoln, James Ray, of the same place; William Thompson, of Leeds, in the county of York, Robert Roberts, of the same place, Samuel Bradburn, of the same place; John Valton, of Birstal, in the said county, John Allen, of the same place, Isaac Brown, of the same place; Thomas Hanson, of Huddersfield, in the said county, John Shaw, of the same place; Alexander Mather, of Bradford, in the said county; Joseph Benson, of Halifax, in the said county, William Dufton, of the same place; Benjamin Rhodes, of Kighley, in the said county; John Easton, of Coln, in the county of Lancaster, Robert Costerdine of the same place; Jasper Robinson, of the Isle of Man, George Button, of the same place; John Pawson, of the city of York; Edward Jackson, of Hull; Charles Atmore, of the said city of York; Launcelot Harrison, of Scarborough; George Shadford, of Hull aforesaid; Barnabas Thomas, of the same place; Thomas Briscoe, of Yarm, in the said county of York, Christopher Peacock, of the same place; William Thom, of Whitby, in the said county of York, Robert Hopkins, of the same place; John Peacock, of Bernard Castle; William Collins, of Sunderland; Thomas Dixon, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Christopher Hopper, of the same place, William Boothby, of the same place; William Hunter, of Berwick-upon-Tweed; Joseph Saunderson, of Dundee, Scotland, William Warrenner, of the same place; Duncan M'Allum, of Aberdeen, Scotland; Thomas Rutherford, of the city of Dublin, in the kingdom of Ireland, Daniel Jackson, of the same place;

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Henry Moore, of the city of Cork, Ireland, Andrew Blair, of the same place; Richard Watkinson, of Limerick, Ireland; Nehemiah Price, of Athlone, Ireland: Robert Lindsay, of Sligo, Ireland: George Brown, of Clones, Ireland: Thomas Barbor, of Charlemount, Ireland: Henry Foster, of Belfast, Ireland, and John Crook, of Lisburn, Ireland, gentlemen, being preachers and expounders of God's holy word, under the care and in connexion with the said John Wesley, have been, and now are, and do, on the day of the date hereof, constitute *the members of the said Conference*, according to the true intent and meaning of the said several gifts and conveyances, wherein the words *Conference of the People called Methodists* are mentioned and contained. And that the said several persons before-named, and their successors for ever, to be chosen as herein after-mentioned, are and shall for ever be construed, taken, and be *the Conference of the People called Methodists*. Nevertheless upon the terms, and subject to the regulations herein after prescribed, that is to say,

First, That the members of the said Conference, and their successors for the time being for ever, shall assemble once in every year, at London, Bristol, or Leeds, (except as after-mentioned) for the purposes aforesaid; and the time and place of holding every subsequent Conference shall be appointed at the preceding one; save that the next Conference after the date hereof shall be holden at Leeds, in Yorkshire, the last Tuesday in July next.

Second, The act of the majority in number of the Conference assembled as aforesaid shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole Conference; to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever.

Third, That after the Conference shall be assembled as

aforesaid, they shall first proceed to fill up all the vacancies occasioned by death, or absence, as after-mentioned.

Fourth, *No act of the Conference assembled as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, or be the act of the Conference, until forty of the members thereof are assembled, unless reduced under that number by death since the prior Conference, or absence, as after-mentioned; nor until all the vacancies occasioned by death, or absence, shall be filled up by the election of new members of the Conference, so as to make up the number of one hundred, unless there be not a sufficient number of persons objects of such election: and during the assembly of the Conference there shall always be forty members present at the doing of any act, save as aforesaid, or otherwise such act shall be void.

Fifth, The duration of the yearly assembly of the Conference shall not be less than five days, nor more than three weeks,† and be concluded by the appointment of the Conference, if under twenty-one days; or otherwise the conclusion thereof shall follow of course at the end of the said twenty-one days; the whole of all which said time of the assembly of the Conference shall be had, taken, considered, and be the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists, and all such acts of the Conference during such yearly assembly thereof shall be the acts of the Conference, and none others.

Sixth, Immediately after all the vacancies occasioned by death, or absence, are filled up by the election of new members as aforesaid, the Conference shall choose a pre-

* This regulation tends to prevent any small party of designing men from executing clandestine measures, as does the regulation which obliges every Conference to fix, in the year preceding, the time of the meeting of the Conference in the year ensuing.

† Otherwise the Conference might continue to sit till the circuits were materially injured by the absence of so many of the preachers.

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sident, and secretary, of their assembly, out of themselves who shall continue such until the election of another president, or secretary, in the next or other subsequent Conference; and the said president shall have the privilege and power of two members in all acts of the Conference during his presidency, and such other powers, privileges, and authorities, as the Conference shall from time to time see fit to entrust into his hands.

Seventh, Any member of the Conference absenting himself from the yearly assembly thereof for two years successively, without the consent or dispensation of the Conference, and being not present on the first day of the third yearly assembly thereof at the time and place appointed for the holding of the same, shall cease to be a member of the Conference from and after the said first day of the said third yearly assembly thereof, to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. But the Conference shall and may dispense with, or consent to, the absence of any member from any of the said yearly assemblies, for any cause which the Conference may see fit or necessary, and such member, whose absence shall be so dispensed with, or consented to by the Conference, shall not by such absence cease to be a member thereof.

Eighth, *The Conference shall and may expel, and put out from being a member thereof, or from being in connexion therewith, or from being upon trial, any person member of the Conference, admitted into connexion, or upon trial, for any cause which to the Conference may seem fit or necessary; and every member of the Conference so expelled and put out shall cease to be a member thereof to all intents and purposes, as though he was

* This is only the power which Mr. Wesley has ever exercised, and must be invested in the Conference after his decease, to enable them to preserve the body pure.

Deed of Declaration.

naturally dead. And the Conference, immediately after the expulsion of any member thereof as aforesaid, shall elect another person to be a member of the Conference, in the stead of such member so expelled.

Ninth, The Conference shall and may admit into connexion with them, or upon trial, any person or persons whom they shall approve, to be preachers and expounders of God's holy word, under the care and direction of the Conference, the name of every such person or persons so admitted into connexion, or upon trial as aforesaid, with the time and degrees of the admission, being entered in the journals or minutes of the Conference.

Tenth, No person shall be elected a member of the Conference, who hath not been admitted into connexion with the Conference as a preacher and expounder of God's holy word, as aforesaid, for twelve months.

Eleventh, The Conference shall not, nor may nominate or appoint any person to the use and enjoyment of, or to preach and expound God's holy word in any of the chapels and premises so given or conveyed, or which may be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, who is not either a member of the Conference, or admitted into connexion with the same, or upon trial, as aforesaid; nor appoint any person for more than three years successively to the use and enjoyment of any chapels and premises already given, or to be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, except ordained ministers of the church of England.

Twelfth, That the Conference shall and may appoint the place of holding the yearly assembly thereof at any other city, town, or place, than London, Bristol, or Leeds when it shall seem expedient so to do.

Thirteenth, And, for the convenience of the chapels and premises already, or which may hereafter be given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, situate in Ireland,

Deed of Declaration.

or other parts out of the kingdom of Great Britain, the Conference shall and may, when, and as often as it shall seem expedient, but not otherwise, appoint and delegate any member, or members of the Conference, with all or any of the powers, privileges, and advantages herein before contained or vested in the Conference; and all and every the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments whatsoever of such member or members of the Conference so appointed and delegated as aforesaid, the same being put into writing, and signed by such delegate or delegates, and entered in the journals or minutes of the Conference, and subscribed, as after-mentioned, shall be deemed, taken, and be, the acts, admissions, expulsions, and appointments of the Conference, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever, from the respective times when the same shall be done by such delegate or delegates, notwithstanding any thing herein contained to the contrary.

Fourteenth, * All resolutions and orders touching elections, admissions, expulsions, consents, dispensations, delegations, or appointments, and acts whatsoever of the Conference, shall be entered and written in the journals or minutes of the Conference, which shall be kept for that purpose, publicly read, and then subscribed by the President and Secretary thereof for the time being, during the time such Conference shall be assembled; and when so entered and subscribed, shall be had, taken, received, and be the acts of the Conference; and such entry and subscription, as aforesaid, shall be had, taken, received, and be evidence of all and every such acts of the said Conference, and of their said delegates, without the aid of any other proof; and whatever shall not be so entered and subscribed, as aforesaid, shall not be had, taken, received, or be the act of the Conference:

* This regulation is necessary, for the preservation of order.

Deed of Declaration.

and the said President and Secretary are hereby required and obliged to enter and subscribe as aforesaid, every act whatever of the Conference.

Lastly, * Whenever the said Conference shall be reduced under the number of forty members, and continue so reduced for three yearly assemblies thereof successively, or whenever the members thereof shall decline or neglect to meet together annually for the purposes aforesaid, during the space of three years, that then, and in either of the said events, the Conference of the people called Methodists shall be extinguished, and all the aforesaid powers, privileges, and advantages shall cease; and the said chapels and premises, and all other chapels and premises, which now are, or hereafter may be settled, given, or conveyed, upon the trusts aforesaid, shall vest in the trustees for the time being of the said chapels and premises respectively, and their successors for ever; *upon trust* that they, and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, do, shall, and may, appoint such person and persons to preach and expound God's holy word therein, and to have the use and enjoyment thereof for such time, and in such manner, as to them shall seem proper.

† Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall

* By this rule care is taken, as far as possible, that the chapels be ever applied to their original design, as places of divine worship, as it enacts, That the Trustees respectively shall have full power to nominate preachers for the chapels for ever, if the members of the Conference so far neglect their duty, that forty of them be not assembled *for three years successively*, at the usual time of holding the Conference, and at the places appointed by the preceding Conferences.

† The word *life-estate*, which has been exceedingly misunderstood by many, and which is a common term in law, means no more than the exercise of all the powers during Mr. Wesley's life, which had been already vested in him by former deeds, or should be by future deeds. It was not in his power to give himself any further rights or privileges in the chapels, than those which the trust-deeds of each chapel respectively invested him with. The clause amounts merely to a reservation of his former powers, and not to an addition of any new right or privilege whatsoever.

Term of the Preachers' probation.

extend, or be construed to extend, to extinguish, lessen, or abridge the life-estate of the said John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, or either of them, of and in any of the said chapels and premises, or any other chapels and premises wherein they the said John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, or either of them, now have, or may have, any estate or interest, power, or authority whatsoever. In witness whereof the said John Wesley hath hereunto set his hand and seal, the twenty-eighth day of February, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, and so forth, and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

JOHN (Seal) WESLEY.

Sealed and delivered (being first
duly stamped) in the presence of

WILLIAM CLULOW, Quality-court,
Chancery-lane, London.

RICHARD YOUNG, Clerk to the said
William Clulow.

The above is a true copy of the original deed, which is enrolled in Chancery, and was therewith examined by us,

WILLIAM CLULOW.

RICHARD YOUNG.

SECT. VIII.

*Continuation of the History of Methodism to the Death
of Mr. Wesley in 1791.*

At the conference in 1784, the term of the preachers' probation was altered from one to four years. It was

Methodism introduced into the Norman Isles—Preachers ordained for Scotland.

also about this time that Methodism extended its benign influence to the Norman Isles, by the pious labours of Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq. of Raithby Hall, Lincolnshire. And about the same period, Mr. Wesley, assisted by other ministers, set apart Dr. Coke, and by him Mr. Asbury, to be bishops or superintendents, of what was henceforth termed the Methodist Episcopal Church in America: as also Thomas Vasey and Richard Whatcoat to act as elders among them. He also abridged the liturgy of the Church of England, and recommended it to be used on Sundays, and for the elders to use that form in administering the Lord's supper.

On the 26th of July, 1785, the forty-second conference began in London. About seventy preachers were present. It was at this time that Mr. Wesley ordained preachers for Scotland; but I cannot say much for the success of this plan. Within the last three years, however, there has been an enlargement of the work.

About the same time there was an enlarged prospect of good being done in Newfoundland.

July 25, 1786, the forty-third conference was opened in Bristol. The question about remaining in union with the church, or separating from it, still agitated some of the preachers and societies: and the following regulations were agreed upon.—Quest. "In what cases do we allow of service in church hours?" Ans. "1. When the minister is a notoriously wicked man. 2. When he preaches Arianism, or any other equally pernicious doctrine. 3. When there are no churches in the town sufficient to contain half the people. And, 4. When there is no church at all within two or three miles. And we advise every one who preaches in the church hours, to read the psalms and lessons with part of the church prayers."

At this conference, Mr. Wesley appointed Dr. Coke to

Dr. Coke appointed for America—Mr. Wesley visits Holland.

visit the British dominions in America. But the Doctor, and the two missionaries destined for Nova Scotia, were constrained by contrary winds, to steer for the West Indies, and landed in Antigua, on Christmas Day. Dr. Coke very properly considered his being driven to the West Indies as providential: and subsequent events have proved that it was most eminently so. This was the grand introductory circumstance which paved the way for those missionary labours in those islands which have been so abundantly owned of God. He left the two missionaries who were intended for Nova Scotia to labour in these islands. Since that time the work has greatly increased.

The 9th of August, 1786, Mr. Wesley paid a second visit to Holland, and returned September the 6th. His former visit was in 1783. He there found some truly pious people, to whom he preached several times, and rejoiced to find that genuine christianity was essentially the same in all countries.

July 31, 1787, and some following days, the forty-fourth conference was held in Manchester, it being the first held in that place during the last thirty years. Mr. Wesley had once before met a few of the preachers there, when the number both of preachers and people was small.

About this time Mr. Wesley ordained some preachers for England only. It seems as if he came at last to this settled opinion, that from the great variety of sentiment among both preachers and people, as well as from the behaviour of many of the clergy, it would be *expedient* as well as *lawful*, that the ordinances should be administered to those who desired them. Meantime he took these steps, that there might be, after all, as near a conformity to the church of England as circumstances would admit. And he was this year convinced, for the first time, that it

Mr. Sutcliffe visits the Scilly Islands—Dispute respecting Dewsbury Chapel.

was the safest way to license all our chapels and traveling preachers.

March 29, 1788, died Mr. Charles Wesley. He was a pious man, an able and useful preacher, and a most admirable writer of sacred poetry.

This year, Mr. Joseph Sutcliffe visited the Scilly Islands, and formed a society, which has continued to the present time. They are an appendage to the Penzance circuit.

The 29th of July, 1788, the forty-fifth conference was held in London.

July 28, 1789, the forty-sixth conference began in Leeds. The most painful business of this conference was, respecting the chapel at Dewsbury. The trustees resisted the conference, and the conference resisted the trustees, till we lost the chapel; and religion received a wound in that place, although we got a new chapel. It was an unfortunate affair, and I think the trustees were greatly to blame; and perhaps the business might have been managed better, on the part of the conference.

July 27, 1790, and following days, the forty-seventh conference was held in Bristol. This was the last at which Mr. Wesley was present. There was nothing very remarkable at this conference, except that one of the preachers was fined 20*l.* for preaching out of doors in a neighbouring village; he was blamed by all the brethren that he did not quietly go to prison.

Mr. Wesley's eye-sight was a little impaired, but in business and the pulpit he was vigorous and strong. Many of the preachers on bidding adieu, seemed to fear the events of the future year. Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke, and the Rev. Mr. Baddily, administered the Lord's Supper at parting.

To every lover of Methodism, and especially to all who

State of the Connexion at Mr. Wesley's death.

venerate the memory of Mr. Wesley, it will be interesting to see the state of our connexion at the time he was taken from us, and received to his great reward. The statement is as follows.

	<i>Circuits.</i>	<i>Preachers.</i>	<i>Members.</i>
In England,	65	196	52,832
In Ireland,	29	67	14,106
In Wales,	3	7	566
In Scotland,	8	18	1,086
In the Isle of Man,	1	3	2,580
In the Norman Isles	2	4	498
In the West India Isles,	7	13	4,500
In the British Domini- nions in America,	4	6	800
In the United States of America,	97	198	43,265
Total,	216	511	120,233

SECT. IX.

Of Mr. Wesley's Death—His last Will, &c.

HAVING brought down the History of Methodism to the period of Mr. Wesley's death, it may be gratifying to many of my readers to know in what manner this aged, venerable, and laborious servant of God finished his earthly career; and to this purpose, I shall devote the present section.

When he felt the infirmities of extreme old age increasing upon him, he would not omit any of his former duties, or exercises, but kept on till he dropt in the harness. His prayer continually was, "Lord let me not live to be useless." At every place after giving to the society

Observations on Mr. Wesley's declining state of health.

what he desired them to consider as his last advice, *To love as brethren, fear God, and honour the king*, he invariably concluded with that verse,

“O that without a lingering groan
I may the welcome word receive;
My body with my charge lay down,
And cease at once to work and live.”

On the 28th of June, 1790, his birth day, he observes, “This day I enter into my eighty-eighth year. For above eighty-six years, I found none of the infirmities of old age; my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated. But last August, I found almost a sudden change: my eyes were so dim, that no glasses would help me; my strength likewise quite forsook me, and probably will not return in this world. But I feel no pain from head to foot, only it seems nature is exhausted, and humanly speaking will sink more and more, till,

“The weary wheels of life stand still at last.”

This, at length, was literally the case. The death of Mr. Wesley, being one of those rare instances in which nature, drooping under the load of years, sinks by a gentle decay. For several years before his death; this decay was perhaps more visible to others than to himself; particularly by a more frequent disposition to sleep during the day; by a growing defect in memory, a faculty he once possessed in a high degree of perfection; and by a general diminution of the vigour and agility he so long enjoyed. His labours, however, suffered little interruption: and when the summons came, it found him, as he always wished it should, in the *harness*, still occupied in his master's work!

On Thursday the 17th of February, 1791, Mr. Wesley preached at Lambeth. When he came home, he seemed

Preaches his last sermon at Leatherhead.

not to be well: and being asked, How he did? He said, he believed he had caught cold.

Friday the 18th, he read and wrote as usual, and preached at Chelsea in the evening. But he was obliged to stop once or twice, and to inform the people, his cold so affected his voice as to prevent his speaking without those necessary pauses.

Saturday the 19th, he filled up most of his time with reading and writing, though his fever and weakness seemed evidently increasing. At dinner he desired a friend to read to him three or four chapters out of the Book of Job. He rose (according to custom) early the next morning, but utterly unfit for his Sabbath day's exercise. At seven o'clock he was obliged to lie down, and slept between three and four hours. When he awoke, he said, "I have not had such a comfortable sleep this fortnight past." In the afternoon he lay down again, and slept an hour or two: afterwards two of his own discourses on our Lord's sermon on the Mount were read to him, and in the evening he came down to supper.

Monday the 21st, he seemed much better; and though his friends tried to dissuade him from it, would keep an engagement made some time before to dine at Twickenham. When he returned home, he seemed better: and on Tuesday went on with his usual work: and preached in the evening at the Chapel in the City-Road.

On Wednesday he went to Leatherhead, and preached to a small company on *Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near*. Here ended the ministerial labours of this man of God. On Thursday he stopped at Mr. Wolff's at Balaam. At this place he was cheerful; and seemed nearly as well as usual, till Friday about breakfast time, when he grew very heavy. About eleven o'clock he returned home,

5.

Is taken ill—his own views of himself,

and having sat down in his room, desired to be left alone, and not to be interrupted for half an hour by any one.

When the limited time was expired, some mulled wine was given him. He drank a little, and seemed sleepy; but in a few minutes threw it up, and said, "I must lie down." He accordingly was put to bed, and lay most of the day, having a quick pulse, and a burning fever.

Saturday the 26th, he continued much the same; spoke but little, and if roused to answer a question, or take a little refreshment, (which was seldom more than a spoonful at a time) he soon dosed again.

On Sunday morning he got up, took a cup of tea, and seemed much better. While sitting in his chair he looked quite cheerful, and repeated the latter part of that verse in the Scripture Hymns on *Forsake me not, when my strength faileth*:

"Till glad I lay this body down,
Thy servant, Lord, attend;
And O! my life of mercy crown
With a triumphant end!"

Soon after, in a most emphatical manner, he said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Some who were then present, speaking rather too much to him, he tried to exert himself, but was soon exhausted and obliged to lie down. After a while, he looked up, and said, "Speak to me, I cannot speak." On which one of the company said, "Shall we pray with you, Sir?" He earnestly replied, "Yes." And while they prayed, his whole soul seemed engaged with God for an answer, and he added a hearty Amen.

About half after two, he said, "There is no need for more than what I said at Bristol. My words then were,

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!"*

* At the Bristol Conference in the year 1783, Mr. Wesley was taken very ill: neither he nor his friends thought he would recover. From the

and reflections on his past life.

One said, "Is this the present language of your heart, and do you now feel as you then did?" He replied, "Yes," When the same person repeated

"Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ my own,"

and added, "'Tis enough. *He*, our precious Emmanuel has purchased, has promised all;" he earnestly replied, "He is all! He is all!" and then said, "I will go." Soon after, to his niece Miss Wesley, who sat by his bed-side, he said, "Sally, have you zeal for God now?" After this the fever was very high, and at times affected his head: but even then, though his head was subject to a temporary derangement, his heart seemed wholly engaged in his Master's work.

In the evening, he got up again, and while sitting in his chair, he said, "how necessary is it for every one to be on the right foundation!

I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!

We must be justified by faith, and then go on to sanctification."

He slept most of the following day, and spoke but little; yet that little testified how much his whole heart was taken up in the care of the churches, the glory of

nature of his complaint, he thought a spasm would speedily seize his stomach, and occasion sudden death. Under these views of his situation, he said to Mr. Bradford, "I have been reflecting on my past life: I have been wandering up and down between fifty and sixty years, endeavouring in my poor way, to do a little good to my fellow-creatures: and, now it is probable that there are but a few steps between me and death, and what have I to trust to for salvation? I can see nothing which I have done or suffered, that will bear looking at. I have no other plea than this: I the chief of sinners am: but Jesus died for me." The sentiment here expressed, and his reference to it in his last sickness, plainly shew how steadily he had persevered in the same views of the Gospel, with which he set out to preach it.

Evinces the happy state of his mind

God, and the things pertaining to that kingdom to which he was hastening. Once in a low, but very distinct voice, he said, "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus."

He afterwards inquired, what the words were on which he preached at Hampstead a short time before. He was told, they were these: *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* He replied, "That is the foundation, the only foundation: there is no other." He also repeated three or four times in the space of a few hours, "*We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*"

Tuesday, March 1st. after a very restless night (though when asked whether he was in pain, he generally answered, "No," and never complained through his whole illness, except once, when he felt a pain in his left breast, when he drew his breath) he began singing,

"All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored :
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear our omnipotent Lord !
Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race ;
Once more to thy people return,
And reign in thy kingdom of grace.

"Oh ! wouldst thou again be made known,
Again in the Spirit descend ;
And set up in each of thine own
A kingdom that never shall end,
Thou only art able to bless,
And make the glad nations obey :
And bid the dire enmity cease,
And bow the whole world to thy sway."

Here his strength failed ; but after lying still awhile, he called for a pen and ink. They were brought to him: but those active fingers which had been the blessed in-

by the repeated praises of God.

struments of conveying spiritual consolation and useful instruction to thousands, could no longer perform their office. Some time after, he said, "I want to write:" But on the pen's being put into his hand, and the paper held before him, he said, "I cannot." One of the company answered, "Let me write for you, Sir: tell me what you would say, "Nothing," replied he, "But, that God is WITH US." In the forenoon he said, "I will get up." While they were bringing his clothes, he broke out in a manner, which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished all present, in these words,

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler pow'rs :
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.

"Happy the man, whose hopes rely
On Israel's God ; he made the sky,
And earth and seas with all their train ;
His truth for ever stands secure,
He saves th' oppress'd, he feeds the poor,
And none shall find his promise vain."

At another time he was feebly endeavouring to speak, beginning "Nature is——Nature is." One that was present, added "Nearly exhausted, but you are entering into a new nature, and into the society of blessed Spirits." He answered "Certainly;" and clasped his hands together, saying "Jesus!" the rest could not be well heard, but his lips continued moving as in fervent prayer.

When he got into his chair, he appeared to change for death: but regardless of his dying frame, he said, with a weak voice, "Lord, thou givest strength to those that can speak, and to those that cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts; and let them know that thou loosest the tongue." He then sung

Calls upon those about him to pray and praise.

“To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree.”

Here his voice failed him, and after gasping for breath, he said, “Now we have done——Let us all go.” He was then laid on the bed, from which he rose no more. After lying still, and sleeping a little, he desired those who were present to pray and praise. They knelt down, and the room seemed to be filled with the divine presence. A little after, he said, “Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel.” Then, as if done with all below, he again begged they would pray and praise. Several friends that were in the house being called up, they all kneeled down to prayer, at which time his fervour of spirit was visible to every one present. But in particular parts of the prayer his whole soul seemed to be engaged in a manner, which evidently shewed how ardently he longed for the full accomplishment of their united desires. And when Mr. Broadbent was praying in a very expressive manner, that if God was about to take away their father to his eternal rest, he would be pleased to continue and increase his blessing upon the doctrine and discipline, which he had long made his aged servant the means of propagating and establishing in the world: such a degree of fervour accompanied his loud *Amen*, as was every way expressive of his soul’s being engaged in the answer of the petitions.

On rising from their knees, he took hold of all their hands, and with the utmost placidness saluted them, and said, “Farewell, farewell.”

A little after, a person coming in, he strove to speak, but could not. Finding they could not understand him, he paused a little, and with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, “THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US;” and then, lifting up his dying arm in token of

Enters into the joy of his Lord.

victory, and raising his feeble voice with a holy triumph not to be expressed, he again repeated the heart-reviving words, "THE BEST OF ALL IS, GOD IS WITH US."

Seeing some persons standing by his bed-side, he asked, "Who are these?" and being informed who they were; Mr. Rogers said, "Sir, we are come to rejoice with you; you are going to receive your crown." "It is the Lord's doing, he replied, and marvellous in our eyes." On being told that his sister-in-law Mrs. Wesley was come, he said, "He giveth his servants rest." He thanked her, as she pressed his hand, and affectionately endeavoured to kiss her. On wetting his lips he said, "We thank thee, O Lord, for these and all thy mercies: bless the Church and King; and grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever!"

At another time, he said, "He causeth his servants to lie down in peace." Then pausing a little, he cried, "The clouds drop fatness!" and soon after, "The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" He then called those present to prayer: and though he was greatly exhausted, he appeared still more fervent in spirit. These exertions were however too much for his feeble frame; and most of the night following, though he often attempted to repeat the Psalm before-mentioned, he could only utter

"I'll praise—I'll praise!"

On Wednesday morning, the closing scene drew near. Mr. Bradford, his faithful friend, prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to articulate was, "Farewell!" A few minutes before ten, the second day of March, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed; without a lingering groan, this man of God, this beloved Pastor of thousands, entered into the joy of his

Lord. He was in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and had been sixty-five years in the ministry. His death was an admirable close of so laborious and useful a life.

At the desire of many friends, his corpse was placed in the New Chapel, and remained there the day before his interment, which was fixed for the 9th of March. His face during that time had a heavenly smile upon it, and a beauty which was admired by all that saw it. The intention was, to carry the corpse into the chapel, and place it in a raised situation before the pulpit, during the service. But the crowds which came to see him, while he lay in his coffin, were so great, that his friends were apprehensive of a tumult, if they proceeded on the plan first intended. It was therefore resolved to bury him between five and six in the morning; of which no notice was given till late the preceding evening: notwithstanding which, the intelligence had so far transpired, that some hundreds attended at that early hour. These, with many tears, saw his dear remains deposited in the vault, which he had some years before prepared for himself, and for those Itinerant Preachers who should die in London. Those whom he loved in life, he chose not to be divided from in death.

The funeral service was read by the late Rev. Mr. Richardson. When he came to that part of the service, "For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear *Brother*, &c." he substituted, with the most tender emphasis, the epithet *Father* instead of *Brother*; which had so powerful an effect on the congregation, that from silent tears, they seemed universally to burst out into loud weeping.

On his coffin was the following inscription: "JOHANNES WESLEY, A. M. Olim. Soc. Coll. Lin. Oxon. Ob. 2do. die Martii, 1791. An. *Æt.* 88."

His Epitaph.

The funeral discourse, which was afterwards printed, was preached by Dr. Whitehead, in the forenoon of the same day, to an astonishing multitude of people, among whom were many ministers of the gospel, both of the establishment and dissenters. The audience was still and solemn as night; and all seemed to carry away with them, enlarged views of Mr. Wesley's character, and serious impressions of the importance of religion.

The following is the inscription on his Tomb:

To the Memory of
The Venerable JOHN WESLEY, A. M.
Late Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.

This great Light arose
(By the singular Providence of God)
To enlighten these Nations,
And to revive, enforce, and defend,
The Pure, Apostolical Doctrine and Practice of
THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH:

Which he continued to do, both by his Writings and his Labours,
For more than Half a Century:

And, to his inexpressible Joy,
Not only, beheld their Influence extending,
And their efficacy witnessed,

In the Hearts and Lives of many Thousands,
As well, in The Western World, as in These Kingdoms:

But also, far above all human Power or Expectation,
Lived to see Provision made, by the singular Grace of God,
For their Continuance and Establishment,
To the Joy of Future Generations!

Reader, If thou art constrained to bless the Instrument,
GIVE GOD THE GLORY!

After having languished a few Days, he at length
Finished his Course and his Life together,
Gloriously triumphing over Death,
March 2nd Anno Domini 1791,
In the 88th Year of his Age.

A Copy of the late Mr. JOHN WESLEY'S Will.

“ In the name of God, Amen !

“ I, John Wesley, clerk, sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, revoking all others, appoint this to be my last Will and Testament.

“ I give all my books now on sale, and the copies of them (only subject to a rent charge of 85*l.* a year to the widow and children of my brother*), to my faithful friends, John Horton, merchant, George Wolff, merchant, and William Marriott, stock-broker, all of London, in trust, for the general fund of the Methodist Conference in carrying on the work of God, by itinerant preachers : on condition that they permit the following committee, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickenson, Thomas Rankin, George Whitefield, and the London assistant for the time being, still to superintend the printing-press, and to employ Hannah Paramore and George Paramore, as heretofore, unless four of the committee judge a change to be needful.

“ I give the books, furniture, and whatever else belongs to me in the three houses at Kingswood, in trust to Thomas Coke, Alexander Mather, and Henry Moore, to be still employed in teaching and maintaining the children of poor travelling preachers.

“ I give to Thomas Coke, Doctor John Whitehead, and Henry Moore, all the books which are in my study and bed-chamber at London, and in my studies elsewhere, in trust for the use of the preachers who shall labour there from time to time.

“ I give the coins, and whatever else is found in the drawer of my bureau at London, to my dear grand-daughters Mary and Jane Smith.

* It was found upon inquiry that the principal sum due was 1600*l.*

His last Will and Testament.

“ I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Doctor Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published, as they see good.

“ I give whatever money remains in my bureau and pockets at my decease, to be equally divided between Thomas Briscoe, William Collins, John Easton, and Isaac Brown.

“ I desire my gowns, cassocks, sashes, and bands, may remain at the chapel for the use of the clergymen attending there.

“ I desire the London assistant for the time being, to divide the rest of my wearing apparel between those four of the travelling preachers that want it most; only my pellise I give to the Rev. Mr. Creighton; my watch to my friend Joseph Bradford, my gold seal to Elizabeth Ritchie.

“ I give my chaise and horses to James Ward and Charles Wheeler, in trust, to be sold, and the money to be divided, one half to Hannah Abbott, and the other to the poor members of the select society.

“ Out of the first money which arises from the sale of books, I bequeath to my dear sister Martha Hall, (if alive) 40*l.* to Mr. Creighton aforesaid, 40*l.* and to the Rev. Mr. Heath 60*l.*

“ And whereas I am empowered, by a late deed, to name the persons who are to preach in the New Chapel at London (the clergymen for a continuance), and by another deed, to name a committee for appointing preachers in the New Chapel at Bath, I do hereby appoint John Richardson, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickenson, clerks, Alexander Mather, William Thompson Henry Moore, Andrew Blair, John Valton, Joseph Bradford, James Rogers, and William Myles, to preach in the New Chapel at London, and to be the committee for appointing preachers in the New Chapel at Bath.

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“ I likewise appoint Henry Brooke, painter, Arthur Keen, Gent. and William Whitestone, stationer, all of Dublin, to receive the annuity of 5*l.* (English) left to Kingswood School by the late Roger Shiel, Esq.

“ I give 6*l.* to be divided among the six poor men, named by the assistant, who shall carry my body to the grave ; for I particularly desire there may be no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me, and are following me to Abraham’s bosom. I solemnly adjure my executors in the name of God, punctually to observe this.

“ Lastly, I give to each of those travelling preachers who shall remain in the connexion six months after my decease, as a little token of my love, the eight volumes of sermons.

“ I appoint John Horton, George Wolff, and William Marriott, aforesaid, to be executors of this my last Will and Testament, for which trouble they will receive no recompence till the resurrection of the just.

“ Witness my hand and seal, the 20th day of February, 1789.

JOHN WESLEY. (Seal)

“ Signed, sealed, and delivered by the said testator as and for his last Will and Testament, in the presence of us,

WILLIAM CLULOW.

ELIZABETH CLULOW.

“ Should there be any part of my personal estate undisposed of by this my Will, I give the same unto my two nieces E. Ellison, and S. Collett, equally.

JOHN WESLEY.

WILLIAM CLULOW.

ELIZABETH CLULOW.

Feb. 25, 1789.

“ I give my types, printing-presses, and every thing pertaining thereto, to Mr. Thomas Rankin, and Mr. George Whitfield, in trust for the use of the conference.

JOHN WESLEY.”

His Character.

SECT. X.

Of Mr. Wesley's Character.

WE shall now take an enlarged view of his character, and consider him,

1. As a man of good mental capacity. All whoever knew him, could not but discover that he had by nature a strong and clear understanding, and an apprehension remarkably quick. Without good natural abilities, as a foundation, no education, however good, or long continued, can make an accomplished man. But,

2. Mr. Wesley had a liberal education. The advantages arising from the knowledge of languages, and of arts and sciences, he possessed in a high degree. And he well knew how to apply these to the most useful purposes as a minister of the gospel. His mind was richly furnished with the various branches of literature. He was well acquainted with the ancient as well as several modern languages. In the learned languages, he was allowed, by the best judges, to be a critic. But it was *sacred* literature which most engaged his attention. He was a great proficient in the Hebrew language, and had read the Old Testament, in that language, with singular attention. And in Greek, the original language of the New Testament, he was an able critic, and so conversant with it, that many times when he was at a loss to repeat a passage out of the New Testament in the words of our common translation, he was seldom at a loss to repeat it in the original Greek, which made it evident, that the words and phrases of the original, were more familiar to him than the words of the English Bible.

3. He studied also the works of creation with great attention, as the five volumes which he published on natural philosophy will sufficiently evince.

4. The art of logic, he had cultivated with much care, and in this science it has been generally acknowledged he was a master. But logic in his view of it, is not the art of wrangling, or of making distinctions where there is no difference; but “The art of good sense; the art of comprehending things clearly; of judging truly; and of reasoning conclusively; or, in another view of it, the art of learning and teaching.”

5. As to morality and religion, his character was the very best. From his infancy, he revered the name and the word of God. He habituated himself to attend to the ordinances of religion, and acted with the utmost conscientiousness and regularity as far as his understanding was informed.

All these properties tended to qualify him, for inquiring after truth. And in consequence of making this inquiry in the most deep and serious manner, he was convinced that in *one* thing he was greatly *lacking*. And this thing was nothing less than the *one thing needful*; or genuine experimental Christianity. Notwithstanding all his attainments, as a linguist, a philosopher, and a student in divinity; notwithstanding his knowledge and fluency on religious subjects; his alms-giving, his willingness to labour and suffer for the good of others, his self-denial, and taking up of his cross, this, he says he had learnt, that he had nothing in, or of himself to plead, nor any hope, but that if he sought he should find Christ, and be found in him, not having on his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* And this opinion was not taken up hastily, but was the result of serious and mature inquiry, a conviction of mind founded on scriptural and rational views of God and himself. He

* See the conclusion of his first Journal.

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used great caution in making up his mind upon the different doctrinal subjects. He searched the scriptures, and exerted the utmost faculties of his reasoning powers. He was an advocate for the exercise of reason in matters of religion, observing, that both our Lord and his apostles reasoned continually with their opposers, and that the strongest reasoner he had ever observed, excepting only Jesus of Nazareth, was Paul of Tarsus ; the man who left that plain direction for all Christians, " In malice, or wickedness, be ye children ; but in understanding, or reason, be ye men."

His general view of religion, was agreeable to the nature of God and man, and their mutual relations. The outcry raised against him, and his followers, as enthusiasts and fanatics, was groundless, and was the offspring of prejudice and ignorance.

He viewed the gospel as a general display of the perfections of God, in which they sweetly harmonize, and shine forth with peculiar lustre. As a dispensation of mercy to men, holding forth a free pardon of sin to all who repent and believe in Christ. As enjoining universal holiness both in heart and life, being designed to regulate our affections, and govern our actions. The gospel holds forth blessings suited to our present state and necessities : wisdom to instruct us, grace to pardon and sanctify us ; together with promises of help and protection through the snares and difficulties of life.

These views of the gospel, Mr. Wesley published, and that with such energy as made a deep and lasting impression upon his hearers. And, in explaining the *order* in which gospel blessings are bestowed, he displayed a mind well instructed. He shewed that the first step towards being a Christian is to repent, and that in order to this the conscience must be awakened, and that till a man be convinced of the evil of sin, he will not depart from

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it: and that till he sees something beautiful in holiness, and desirable in being reconciled to God, the sinner is not duly prepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Read Matt. xi. 17. Acts iii. 19.—xx. 20, 21.

After repentance towards God, the next step is faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, John i. 29. As the only and all-sufficient Saviour, Luke xix. 10. 1 Tim. i. 15. 1 Cor. i. 30.

Mr. Wesley accurately distinguished sanctification from justification; he shewed that justification admits us into a state of grace and favour with God, into a state of fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ; that being justified, our relation to God is altered, our sins are forgiven, and we are become children of God, and heirs of all the great and precious promises of the gospel. He did not stop here, but inculcated the necessity of sanctification, nay, urging believers to go on to perfection, Heb. vi. 1, 2. This sometimes made even some pious persons, from mistaken views of his sentiments, raise a clamour against him. But he often and sufficiently explained his meaning, specifying that by perfection, he meant such a measure of love to God and man, and such an attachment to every thing that is lovely or of good report, that the heart will be averse to all evil, and readily disposed for every good word and work.

Mr. Wesley maintained that God is love, and therefore, he is loving unto every man, and his tender mercy is over all his works, Psalm cxlv. 9. He maintained that Christ died for all, that all are invited to come to him for salvation, and that whosoever thus cometh to him he will in no wise cast out. He maintained, that a sufficiency of grace is given to all, and that while all the glory of the salvation of those who get to heaven will belong to God, the blame of the damnation of those who go to hell will wholly belong to themselves. On this account he

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was sometimes termed an Arminian. And some who used the term attached ideas to it, that were far from being just respecting Mr. Wesley. Some supposed that as an Arminian, he preached salvation by works, and degraded Christ. But this was very erroneous. He preached the doctrine of free grace as much as any Calvinist, asserting that eternal life, and every degree of preparation for it, are all the free, undeserved gifts of God. Rom. vi. 23. Nevertheless, he insisted upon good works as the necessary and indispensable fruits of faith.

One point more must be briefly touched upon, I mean that of Christian experience. Many have supposed this to be mere imagination, and hence has arisen the charges of enthusiasm. But true Christian experience is real, and rests upon a foundation as solid as the evidence of our senses.

Christian experience, is knowledge founded upon experiment, and is the present possession of the benefits of the gospel, which tends to prepare us for the future enjoyment of that eternal rest which remaineth for the people of God. If we use the word in the most comprehensive sense, so as to include the receiving of Christ in his mediatorial offices, it will imply repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the various fruits of the Spirit, viz. love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, and temperance, Gal. v. 22, 23.

In the New Testament we read of persons who did experience the witness and fruits of the Spirit. And it is certain that *we* may experience these also, if we seek them in the way which God has appointed. The evidence which a man has who experiences these things, is of the strongest kind. If a man's understanding be enlightened with gospel truths; if his conscience be awa-

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kened ; if in consequence of this, he turn from his sins, is humbled and ashamed before God, and prays for mercy ; is it possible that such a change as this should take place, in his views of himself, in the dictates of his conscience, and in his conduct, and he not know it ? And when a person is enabled to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul ; to rest fully upon him for pardon and acceptance with God ; such a person must be conscious of this act of his mind, and the change in his views of God, and the feelings of his heart that consequently follow. Will he not be as conscious and certain of these things as when he sees an object before him, or feels pleasure or pain ? If he that believeth be filled with love, joy, peace, and the other fruits of the Spirit, must he not be certain of this ? Our internal consciousness carries the same conviction of reality with it as our external senses. Would it not appear exceedingly absurd to you, if you heard a person say, that he loved an object dearly, but was not conscious of any love ? That he rejoiced exceedingly in a thing, but that he did not feel any joy ? In like manner, if believing in Christ, I feel peace, I cannot but know this ; and if I look up to God through Jesus Christ with holy confidence, and feel joyful in his salvation, I must be conscious and certain of it. *Christian experience*, then, as Mr. Wesley explained it, for so many years, both in preaching and writing, has *certainly* in it : if a man has it he cannot be ignorant of it. But, we must say, that those who have it not, cannot form a just conception of it. It is impossible for those who have not felt the peace of God to form a just notion of it. The evidence of this stands on the same ground as the evidence of our external senses. If a man had never seen colours, he could not form any true idea of them. And if a man had never felt pain or pleasure, he could not be taught to understand what they are,

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however perfect his rational faculties might be. To *know* them he must *feel* them. It is just so in Christian experience. You must feel it, and then you will know what it is, and as easily distinguish it from the feelings or consciousness arising from other things, as you distinguish seeing from hearing, or touching from smelling.

Let us now glance at the *labours* of Mr. Wesley, and also at their happy effects. From his earliest youth he was a person of the greatest diligence and industry. And when he became a preacher, and especially after he was more perfectly instructed in the genuine doctrines of the gospel, he was "instant in season, and out of season," being "in his labours more abundant, than most ministers of the gospel." In him were united, the necessary qualifications for useful study and active life. He preached in churches wherever he had an opportunity, not only in the commencement of what is termed Methodism, but to the conclusion of his long and laborious life. In the beginning especially, the doctrines he preached offended some, and the attendant crowds raised envy and jealousy in others, so that most of the churches were soon shut against him. He then went out into the highways, as well as into the streets and lanes of cities, to invite sinners to come to the gospel feast. By this step, he at once abandoned every former prospect of ease, honour, and wealth; while nothing presented itself to his view, for this world, but labour and weariness, accompanied with contempt, reproach, and persecution. Most certainly nothing but a sense of duty, could influence a man of such calm and deliberate reflection to take such a step. Mr. Wesley was *regular* and *steady* in his labours; and these labours were carried to an astonishing extent. He endured many hardships, and suffered much reproach. And, what to some may appear more than this, he kept regularly to his work, in defiance

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the pleasure he found in reading and study, and the still more fascinating charms of rational and polite conversation.

For more than sixty years, he constantly rose at four o'clock in the morning. The work of God, in which he was engaged, occupied his time and attention, and considering it as the great business of his life, he made every thing else subservient to it.

During a few of his last years he travelled in a carriage, the expenses of which were borne at first by a few friends, and afterwards chiefly by the stewards of the places he visited. Prior to this, he travelled on horseback, and often for thirty, forty, or fifty miles in a day, besides preaching twice, thrice, or four times. If we consider the whole of his labours, and compare them with those of many other men who have been deemed industrious, we might almost say that he lived life twice or thrice over.

But what has attracted the most public attention are the *effects* of Mr. Wesley's labours. These, in conjunction with those of his brother Charles and Mr. Whitefield, and their helpers and successors, have had a most extensive influence on all denominations of professing Christians in the British empire, and the United States of America; and their influence, in some measure, has extended to various other nations. They have had, especially, no small influence on many ministers of the different denominations in awakening their attention to the genuine essential doctrines of the gospel, and the duties of the Christian ministry, though some of these ministers have been ashamed to acknowledge it. At any rate, the labours of these men, and especially those of Mr. Wesley, have under God, produced the whole body of Methodists, now so numerous in great Britain and Ireland, in the West Indies, and on the American continent. And

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wherever these are found, with very few, if any exceptions, they are more unblamable and exemplary in their conduct than they were before; breathe more of a true Christian spirit, and display more of genuine Christianity, than they ever did with regard to every state, relation, and condition of life. And the Methodists are not only better *Christians* and better *citizens* than they were before, but better *subjects*. It is one rule of this society, that all the members of it, shall yield subjection to the laws of the land, and render tribute to the state as required, avoiding smuggling, and every practice of contraband trade.

In these labours of love, productive of so many and so good effects, did Mr. Wesley spend between fifty and sixty years of his life.

His travels were incessant, and almost unparalleled. Without the greatest punctuality and care in the management of his time, he could not have gone through his abundant and diversified labours. He had stated hours for every purpose, and did not suffer one thing to interfere with another. At nine o'clock he regularly retired to rest, and rose at four in the morning: and no business, company, or conversation, could induce him to depart from these rules of conduct. He wrote, travelled, visited the sick, and did every thing else in hours appointed, which hours were inviolable. To ascertain the precise measure of Mr. Wesley's labours, would be an impossible task. His public ministrations were but a part of them. But from these, we may form some conception of the rest. For more than fifty years successively, he generally preached twice every day, and in his earlier years, not unfrequently four or five times. To these may be added numberless exhortations, addressed to the societies after preaching, with various other employments. The lowest calculation we can make of his travels will be four

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thousand miles annually, which in fifty-two years will make two hundred and eight thousand miles. And at the lowest computation, in these fifty-two years, from 1739 to 1791, he could not preach fewer than forty thousand sermons. He read a great deal as he travelled. Even when he travelled on horse-back, which practice he continued till he was very old; and would travel forty, fifty, or sixty miles a day, with a book in his hand.

On observing his manner of writing, he seemed to be a very slow writer: yet, by constant, unwearied, and persevering application, what numbers of volumes did he publish! In addition to these publications, perhaps he wrote a greater number of letters to the preachers, various members of the societies, and other persons, than were ever written by any man in the world.

No man could with greater propriety adopt the apostle's language, and say, *Are they apostles? I more, in labours more abundant.* What man ever laboured so constantly, so abundantly, so unweariedly, and for so long a time, as Mr. Wesley! This his laboriousness sprung from a true and living faith, in the being and attributes of God, the truth and divinity of the scriptures, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. This faith, wrought by love, purified the heart, overcame the world, and produced inward and outward holiness. He walked worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called. A man so holy and unblamable, so laborious in the best of employments, and influenced by the purest and best of motives, some might have supposed, would have glided through the world with honour, and that the world in general would have applauded and blessed him. But he found it necessary to remember the words of our Saviour, "Blessed are ye, when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely for my names' sake." A truly eminent man has a double cha-

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racter, being highly applauded by some, and grievously slandered by others. If universal approbation and applause had been to be secured by wisdom, by holiness, or any thing that is lovely, or of good report, surely Jesus Christ and his apostles, would have secured it. But this we know, was not the case. They went through evil report as well as good report, and through dishonour as well as honour. And in this respect did Mr. Wesley drink largely of the cup of which they drank. Nay, it is remarkable, that he was reproached especially by the clergy, from the least even unto the greatest, from the needy curate, and half fledged youth, up to "doctor's grave, and prelates of threescore." Many of those said all manner of evil of him falsely. It is not difficult to accuse: but in point of proof, accusers are often found wanting. This was most remarkably the case with regard to the accusers of Mr. Wesley. In controversy, they never replied to his defence.

The only crime the accusers ever *proved*, was, "That he *laboured more*, and he was *more beloved*." But, we have before seen, in the brief account of the persecutions of the Methodists, that Mr. Wesley did not merely suffer reproach, but opposition in every possible form, and frequently from tumultuous mobs, when rude fellows, men of the baser sort, sons of Belial, opposed and vilified the right ways of the Lord. From these he was in perils in country towns and villages, and in the great and populous cities. It was not enough, that, frequently he had no temple but the wide creation, no pulpit but a wall, a table, or a stone; no sounding-board, but the canopy of Heaven; but mistaken mortals, for whose sake he had suffered the loss of all things, and for whose salvation he had consented to be vile in the eyes of the world, being exceedingly mad against him, would often cry out, "Away with him, away with such a fellow from the

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earth." Yet none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself, that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus. He was patient in doing well, and bearing ill; in all these things he was more than conqueror; and like the captain of his salvation, made perfect through suffering. But what was that which supported and cheered him under all these things? Why, the clear view he had of the vast importance of spiritual and eternal things; the great worth of an immortal soul; the joys of heaven, and the beauty of holiness. A full conviction that he was in the way of duty; the approving testimony of his own conscience; the success with which the Lord crowned his labours; and the good hope through grace, which he had of an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our God and Saviour. Many have represented him as a man of slender capacity; but certainly with great injustice. His writings, and his controversial writings more especially, will fully prove the contrary. To this may be added the office he filled with such distinction at Oxford, and the great abilities which he displayed in the government of his preachers and people. As a writer he possessed talents both from nature and education. What he was as a preacher, may be gathered from the nine volumes of his sermons, which are in so many hands.

His attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive; his voice was not loud, but clear, agreeable, and masculine; and his style was neat, perspicuous, and pleasing.

When he had time to make proper preparation for the pulpit, he was admirable; when his numerous employments, and great fatigues in travelling, prevented this, he was sometimes not so excellent. Yet when fatigue of body, peculiar exercises of mind, or want of time for

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premeditation, caused him to fall short of his general excellence, the observation of Dr. Beattie, of Aberdeen, who heard him on one such occasion, was generally verified, "It was not a *masterly sermon*, yet none but a *master* could have preached it."

The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. In person, he was rather below the middle size, but remarkably well proportioned. He had a good constitution, and seemed not to have the smallest quantity of superfluous flesh. In every period of his life, his habit of body was the reverse of corpulent, and was expressive of the strictest temperance, and constant exercise. He was muscular and strong, till a very few years before his death; had a firm step, and was a remarkably good walker. His face was remarkably fine, even to old age; and the freshness of his complexion continued to the last week of his life: his whole countenance was remarkably expressive; few saw him without being struck with his appearance; and numbers, who had been greatly prejudiced against him, have conceived sentiments of esteem and veneration for him, as soon as they have been introduced into his presence. His face, for an old man, was one of the finest that ever was seen: he had a clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, and an eye as bright and piercing as can be imagined. And in his countenance and behaviour, there was an admirable mixture of cheerfulness and gravity.

In dress, he was a pattern of plainness and neatness. His coat was without a cape, and with a small upright collar; he wore a narrow plaited stock about his neck, and no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel. And not only in his person and dress, but in every thing he was a model of neatness. In his chamber and study, during the winter months, when he resided in London,

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his books, his papers, and every thing belonging to him, were in the most perfect order. He seemed to be always at home: and yet was always ready to undertake the longest journey.

In private he was cheerful and communicative: his conversation was pleasing, and frequently very instructive. He had been much accustomed to society; knew how to behave to different descriptions of people; and possessed and practised true politeness. He spoke a good deal in company in general; and the knowledge he had acquired by reading, travelling, and observation, he liberally communicated, and that in the most pleasing and attracting manner. The late celebrated Dr. Johnson was personally acquainted with him, and his judgment of Mr. Wesley's manner of conversation is left on record; he said, "Mr. Wesley's conversation is good; he talks well on any subject; I could converse with him all night."*

* The following letter will give the world a just notion of the high opinion which Dr. Johnson had of this extraordinary man.

"SIR,

"When I received your commentary on the Bible, I durst not, at first, flatter myself that I was to keep it, having so little claim to so valuable a present, and when Mrs. Hall informed me of your kindness, was hindered from time to time from returning you those thanks which I now entreat you to accept.

"I have thanks likewise to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question. To have gained such a mind as your's, may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has had upon the public I know not; but I have now no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right, who, though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit the chair while Plato staid.

"I am,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your most humble Servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Feb. 6, 1776.

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He joined in all conversation that was blameless, and his cheerfulness was remarkable, and continued to the end of his life. He generally concluded the conversation with two or three verses of a hymn, illustrating the subject of discourse.

After supper, he often sung the following verse; then prayed, and retired.

O may our guardians while we sleep,
Around our beds their vigils keep;
The love angelical instil,
Stop all the avenues of ill:
May they celestial joys rehearse,
And thought to thought with us converse.

His natural temper was warm and vehement. Religion had done much in correcting this, yet it was still visible. Outward persecution, he bore without wrath, and apparently, almost without feeling. But when he was opposed by his preachers, or people, his displeasure was visible. But never did the sun go down upon his wrath, nor did he in this respect give place to the devil; generally it was over almost in a moment: he was easily pacified, and ready to forgive injuries and affronts. It has been justly said of him, that

“ He carried anger, as the flint bears fire;
Which, much enforced, shews a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.”

Of this imperfection, however, he was very sensible, and very readily acknowledged it, and sometimes asked forgiveness in such a spirit of genuine humility, as greatly affected those who witnessed it.

His liberality to the poor knew no bounds, but want of ability to help them more abundantly; after barely providing for his own wants, he devoted all the rest to the necessities of others. In mercy to the bodies of me

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the philanthropic Mr. Howard came the nearest to him of any of our day. Mr. Howard was the friend, acquaintance, and admirer of Mr. Wesley. And he was stimulated to a more vigorous prosecution of his own benevolent plan, by observing in the case of Mr. Wesley, what a single man might do by zeal and perseverance. To relieve and help the poor, was with him a luxury of life. He considered them as if they existed that the followers of Christ might have an opportunity of shewing what benevolence they would shew to their Divine Master had he been now upon earth.

Mr. Wesley, from the profits of his publications, &c. might have accumulated a large fortune ; but he laid up his treasure not on earth, but in heaven. Whatever he received, and from whatever source, only went *through* his hands, but did not remain *in* them. In the numerous chapels which were built for himself and his helpers to preach in, he neither secured, nor claimed the least personal property : and when he displayed a zealous concern that these should be properly settled, it was not on account of any personal advantage, but that it should not be in the power of a few changeable, capricious individuals, to alienate these buildings from the purpose for which they were built.

A man of a more extraordinary character than Mr. Wesley probably never lived upon this earth. He was a person of sincere and exemplary piety. And for more than fifty years successively, his great and various labours were most astonishing. His travels, his studies, and his ministerial labours, were each of them, when taken separately, more than sufficient for any ordinary man. Few men could have endured to travel so much as he did, without either preaching, writing, or reading. Few could have endured to preach as often as he did, supposing they had neither travelled nor written books.

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And very few men have written and published so many books as he did, though they had always avoided both preaching and travelling.

That which I think peculiarly characteristic of him, was his freedom from extremes, and his every excellence having its proper bounds. Hence,

1. He was neither a Pharisee nor an Antinomian; but his personal religion, and his religious system, were both evangelical and moral.

2. He was neither a latitudinarian nor a bigot. His own principles were fixed; and yet he was candid and liberal towards men whose sentiments were different from his.

3. There was in him an admirable mixture of the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove.

4. He possessed, practised, and propagated, a religion that was neither formal nor superstitious, but both spiritual and rational.

5. Some persons are meek, but not courageous; others are courageous, but deficient in meekness; but he was both courageous and meek; and it is hard to say, in which of these virtues he was excelled.

6. Some people's gravity sinks into dulness, while the vivacity of others degenerates into levity; but his was cheerful without being light, and grave without being sad.

7. His zeal was tempered with moderation, while his moderation was inspired with zeal. He was always employed, yea, always abounding in the work of the Lord, yet so managed himself and his work, as still to be able to do to-morrow as he had done to-day, and this with very little variation, for more than half a century.

In point of great, extensive, and long-continued usefulness, I believe no history furnishes a character equal to that of Mr. Wesley. And were it necessary, the truth of this testimony could be attested by thousands, and

His Character.

tens of thousands, among the miners in Cornwall, the colliers about Kingswood and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and other reformed and regenerated sinners, in almost every city, town, and village in the united kingdom. Many have done excellently, but he excelled them all. And he laid such a foundation for the continuation of the work, that it is already nearly trebled.

The following beautiful portrait of Mr. Wesley was drawn by a masterly hand. It appeared soon after his death, in a very respectable publication; and was afterwards inserted in Woodfall's Diary, June 17, 1791; from whence it is taken, with but one or two trifling alterations.

“ His indefatigable zeal in the discharge of his duty has been long witnessed by the world; but, as mankind are not always inclined to put a generous construction on the exertion of singular talents, his motives were imputed to the love of popularity, ambition, and lucre. It now appears that he was actuated by a disinterested regard to the immortal interest of mankind. He laboured, and studied, and preached, and wrote, to propagate, what he believed to be the gospel of Christ. The intervals of these engagements were employed in governing and regulating the concerns of his numerous societies; assisting the necessities, solving the difficulties, and soothing the afflictions of his hearers. He observed so rigid a temperance, and allowed himself so little repose, that he seemed to be above the infirmities of nature, and to act independent of the earthly tenement he occupied. The recital of the occurrences of every day of his life would be the greatest encomium.

“ Had he loved wealth, he might have accumulated without bounds. Had he been fond of power, his influence would have been worth courting by any party.

His Character.

I do not say he was without ambition; he had *that* which Christianity need not blush at. I do not mean, that which is gratified by splendour and large possessions; but that which commands the hearts and affections, the homage and gratitude, of thousands. For him they felt sentiments of veneration, only inferior to those which they paid to heaven: to him they looked as their father, their benefactor, their guide to glory and immortality: for him they fell prostrate before God, with prayers and tears, to spare his doom, and prolong his stay. Such a recompence as this, is sufficient to repay the toils of the longest life. Short of *this*, greatness is contemptible impotence. Before this, lofty prelates bow, and princes hide their diminished heads.

“ His zeal was not a transient blaze, but a steady and constant flame. The ardour of his spirit was neither damped by difficulty, nor subdued by age. This was ascribed by himself, to the power of Divine grace; by the world to *enthusiasm*. Be it what it will, it is what philosophers must envy, and infidels respect; it is that which gives energy to the soul, and without which there can be no greatness or heroism.

“ Why should we condemn that in religion, which we applaud in every other profession and pursuit? He had a vigour and elevation of mind, which nothing but the belief of the Divine favour and presence could inspire. This threw a lustre round his infirmities, changed his bed of sickness into a triumphal car, and made his *exit* resemble an *apotheosis* rather than a dissolution.

“ He was qualified to excel in every branch of literature: he was well versed in the learned tongues, in metaphysics, in oratory, in logic, in criticism, and every requisite of a Christian minister. His style was nervous, clear, and manly; his preaching was pathetic and persuasive; his Journals are artless and interesting; and

His Character.

his compositions and compilations to promote knowledge and piety were almost innumerable.

“ I do not say he was without faults, or above mistakes ; but they were lost in the multitude of his excellencies and virtues.

“ To gain the admiration of an ignorant and superstitious age, requires only a little artifice and address ; to stand the test of *these* times, when all pretensions to sanctity are stigmatized as hypocrisy, is a proof of genuine piety, and real usefulness. His great object was, to revive the obsolete doctrines, and extinguished spirit of the church of England ; and they who are its friends, cannot be his enemies. Yet for this he was treated as a fanatic and impostor, and exposed to every species of slander and persecution. Even bishops and dignitaries entered the lists against him ; but he never declined the combat, and generally proved victorious. He appealed to the Homilies, the Articles, and the Scriptures, as vouchers for his doctrine ; and they who could not decide upon the merits of the controversy, were witnesses of the effects of his labours ; and they judged of the tree by its fruit. It is true, he did not succeed much in the higher walks of life ; but that impeached his cause no more, than it did the first planters of the gospel. However, if he had been capable of assuming vanity on that score, he might rank among his friends some persons of the first distinction, who would have done honour to any party. After surviving almost all his adversaries, and acquiring respect among those who were the most distant from his principles, he lived to see the plant he had reared, spreading its branches far and wide, and inviting not only these kingdoms, but the Western world, to repose under its shade. No sect, since the first ages of Christianity, could boast a founder of such extensive talents and endowments. If he had been a candidate for

His Character.

literary fame, he might have succeeded to his utmost wishes; but he sought not the praise of man; he regarded learning only as the instrument of usefulness. The great purpose of his life was doing good. For this he relinquished all honour and preferment; to this he dedicated all the powers of body and mind; at all times and in all places, in season and out of season, by gentleness, by terror, by argument, by persuasion, by reason, by interest, by every motive and every inducement, he strove with unwearied assiduity, to turn men from the error of their ways, and awaken them to virtue and religion. To the bed of sickness, or the couch of prosperity: to the prison, the hospital, the house of mourning, or the house of feasting, wherever there was a friend to serve, or a soul to save, he readily repaired; to administer assistance or advice, reproof or consolation. He thought no office too humiliating, no condescension too low, no undertaking too arduous, to reclaim the meanest of God's offspring. The souls of all men were equally precious in his sight, and the value of an immortal creature beyond all estimation. He penetrated the abodes of wretchedness and ignorance, to rescue the profligate from perdition; and he communicated the light of life to those who sat in darkness and the shadow of death. He changed the outcasts of society, into useful members; civilized even savages, and filled those lips with prayer and praise, that had been accustomed only to oaths and imprecations. But as the strongest religious impressions are apt to become languid, without discipline and practice, he divided his people into classes and bands, according to their attainments. He appointed frequent meetings for prayer and conversation, where they gave an account of their experience, their hopes and fears, their joys and troubles: by which means they were united to

His Character.

each other, and to their common profession. They became centinels upon each other's conduct, and securities for each other's character. Thus the seeds he sowed sprang up and flourished, bearing the rich fruits of every grace and virtue. Thus he governed and preserved his numerous societies, watching their improvement with a paternal care, and encouraging them to be faithful to the end.

“ But I will not attempt to draw his full character, nor to estimate the extent of his labours and services. They will be best known when he shall deliver up his commission into the hands of his great Master.”

A Tablet to Mr. Wesley's memory is placed on the left side of the communion-table of the New Chapel in the City-road, bearing the following inscription :

Sacred to the Memory
Of the Rev. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.
Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.
A Man in Learning and sincere Piety,
Scarcely inferior to any :
In Zeal, Ministerial Labours, and extensive Usefulness,
Superior (perhaps) to all Men
Since the days of St. Paul.
Regardless of Fatigue, personal Danger, and Disgrace,
He went out into the highways and hedges,
Calling Sinners to Repentance,
And preaching the Gospel of Peace.
He was the Founder of the Methodist Societies,
The Patron and Friend of the Lay-Preachers :
By whose aid he extended the Plan of Itinerant preaching;
Through Great Britain and Ireland,
The West Indies and America,
With unexampled success.
He was born June 17th, 1703,
And died March 2nd, 1791,
In sure and certain hope of Eternal Life
Through the Atonement and Mediation of a Crucified Saviour.
He was sixty-five years in the Ministry,
And fifty-two an Itinerant Preacher.
He lived to see in these Kingdoms only,
About three hundred Itinerant
And a thousand Local Preachers,
Raised up from the midst of his own People,
And eighty thousand Persons in the Societies under his care.
His Name will ever be had in grateful Remembrance
By all who rejoice in the universal Spread
Of the Gospel of Christ.
Soli Deo Gloria.

Disputes about the Old Plan—Districts first formed.

SECT. XI.

Further Continuation of Methodism, to the Conference in 1811.

JULY 26, 1791, the forty-eighth conference assembled at Manchester, according to the appointment of the last conference. More than two hundred preachers were present: and every one seemed sensible of the loss the connexion had sustained by the death of Mr. Wesley. Mr. Thompson was chosen president, and Dr. Coke secretary.

The sticklers, for what was called the Old Plan, having printed and circulated their opinions and wishes, and vehemently urging a conformity to them, naturally provoked replies from those in different places, who wished to see something more conformable to their ideas of Christian liberty. Thus a dispute was created which for several years continued to convulse the societies, and to perplex and distress the preachers. At this conference, to supply the want of Mr. Wesley's general superintendence, the plan of districts was adopted, making a number of circuits to compose a district; there being mostly not less than three, nor more than eight circuits in a district; and in general there were five. England was divided into seventeen districts, Ireland into five, Scotland into two, and Wales formed but one. The Lord was better to us than our fears, and almost exceeded what we had ventured to hope. We broke up in peace and harmony, with cheering prospects, and thankful hearts.

On the 31st of July, 1792, our forty-ninth conference began in London; Mr. Alexander Mather was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary. Several circumstances contributed to make this an uncomfortable conference. One was, the dispute with Dr. Whitehead, about writing the

Administration of the Lord's-Supper decided by lot.

life of Mr. Wesley. After much of what was very unpleasant, the business ended in the publication of two separate lives of Mr. Wesley; one by Dr. Whitehead, and the other by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore.

At this time there was much uneasiness in the connexion, occasioned by contentions about the propriety, or impropriety, of having the service in church-hours, and the Lord's-Supper administered among us in some places. Touching this last particular, the conference was much embarrassed. It was at length agreed, after very fervent prayer, to decide the matter by lot: and this decided, *that the Lord's-Supper should not be administered in the societies for that year.* This result was made known to the people by an address, and was the first instance of the conference addressing the people. This has been done repeatedly since, and sometimes with good effect.

The rules of the preachers' fund were now considered, enlarged, and somewhat altered; meantime the annual subscription of each preacher to the fund was raised from half-a-guinea to a guinea.

Our fiftieth conference met in Leeds, and began its sittings July 29, 1793: Mr. John Pawson was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary. This conference came to the determination, that the societies should have the Lord's-Supper where they unanimously desired it.

July 28, 1794, and some following days, the fifty-first conference was held in Bristol: Mr. Thomas Hanby was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—Several things caused this to be an unpleasant conference. Trustees from many of the principal societies assembled in Bristol, at the same time as the conference. Their addresses, and the negotiations we thought proper to enter into with them, were productive of many difficulties.

During the ensuing year, the connexion was generally and greatly convulsed. The chief part of these agita-

The trustees of the Old Room in Bristol forbid Mr. Moore's preaching.

tions sprung, either immediately, or remotely, from the following circumstances: the trustees of the Old Room, and of Guinea-street chapel, in Bristol, were exceedingly averse to any deviation from what was termed *The Old Plan*. The Lord's-Supper, and service in church-hours, had been recently introduced, in a new place, called Portland Chapel, in the suburbs of the city. And one of the preachers appointed for that circuit, Mr. Henry Moore, being friendly to this alleged innovation, the trustees before-mentioned, resolved upon strong measures. Accordingly, they employed an attorney to write to him, charging him, *at his peril, not to trespass on their premises, as they had not appointed him to preach therein, and because no other person had any authority so to do*. This was a step unheard of by any Dissenting trust in the kingdom; and, if submitted to, would have created a precedent, which might have subjected many other preachers to a similar discharge from different pulpits, by the authority of a few, without trial, or even accusation, and contrary to the judgment and wishes of the chief part of the people, both in the town and circuit, as was the case in this instance. This measure occasioned a great struggle, in which the chief part of the whole connexion, in some measure, partook. But the cause of the trustees was indefensible, though some attempted to defend them; and a majority of both preachers and people declared against them. This discomfited and confounded the party, and prevented worse consequences which would have followed, and that upon a general scale. This was a grand crisis of Methodism; and I have no scruple in saying, that the success of Mr. Moore and his friends was, in one sense, the salvation of the connexion.

July 27, 1795, the fifty-second conference began at Manchester: Mr. Joseph Bradford was president, and Dr. Eoke, secretary. The first day was employed in

[Plan of pacification—Expulsion of Mr. A. Kilham.]

fasting and prayer, that the Almighty would enable us to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Nor did we ask in vain. The next morning it was agreed, to choose by ballot, a committee of nine preachers, to form a plan of pacification; in order to put an end to the disputes that then existed, and to prevent the like in future. This plan was accepted by the conference, with some modifications, and was agreed to also by a large majority of the trustees who were assembled at the same time and place, from various parts of the connexion.*

On July 25, 1796, the fifty-third conference commenced its sittings in London: Mr. Thomas Taylor was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary. The most notable act of this conference was the expulsion of Alexander Kilham, for divers things which he had lately published in a pamphlet, called "The Progress of Liberty," and others of the like nature and tendency. In many respects, his conduct in these publications was unjustifiable. After his expulsion, in the pulpits of Dissenters, where he gained admission, and from the press, he endeavoured to justify his conduct, and to bring the preachers into contempt with the Methodists, and with the public. But his race was soon run, for December 20, 1798, he died of a short illness, occasioned by a bone sticking in his throat. Prior to this, however, he had effected great divisions in various parts of our connexion; and his friends still continue a separate, though not a very increasing party.

July 31, 1797, the fifty-fourth conference began its sittings in Leeds: Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. Samuel Bradburn, secretary. During the year preceding, great preparations had been made for a considerable division of the societies, especially in the Leeds, Shef-

* See the Plan of Pacification in the Minutes of 1795.

Divisions in some societies—Rebellion in Ireland.

field, Stockport, Manchester, Huddersfield, and Nottingham circuits. About five thousand formed themselves into a separate party. For fear of a larger division, the conference agreed to make considerable sacrifices; the preachers resigning considerable portions of power, respecting temporal matters, division of circuits, receiving and excluding members, the appointment and removal of leaders, stewards, and local preachers. It is doubtful whether the concessions made were not something larger than will be for the general good, and more than scripture and reason will justify.

July 30, 1798, the fifty-fifth conference began in Bristol: Mr. Joseph Benson was president, and Mr. Samuel Bradburn, secretary. Very little either new or extraordinary occurred.

During the preceding year, the Methodists in Ireland had been greatly distressed by the savage and bloody rebellion in that country. The address of the preachers to the English conference, said, "Loss of trade, breach of confidence, fear of assassination, towns burnt, countries laid waste, houses, for miles, without an inhabitant, the air tainted with the stench of thousands of putrid carcasses, form some outlines of the melancholy picture of our times." Many of our people, and some of the preachers, were exposed to considerable sufferings. The English conference sympathized with their Irish brethren, and agreed that the wants of Ireland should be supplied before those of England.

July 29, 1799, the fifty-sixth conference opened at Manchester: Mr. Samuel Bradburn was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary. It was a conference of great peace. We were, however, greatly embarrassed for want of money to meet the deficiencies and distresses of many of the brethren. And there was no resource but the making an extraordinary collection in the different circuits.

State of the connexion in 1800—Public collection for the Missions.

Let us again survey the state of the connexion in respect to numbers of circuits, preachers, and members :

	<i>Circuits.</i>	<i>Preachers.</i>	<i>Members.</i>
In England,	107	288	84,429
In Ireland,	34	83	16,227
In Scotland,	6	16	1,117
In Wales,	5	11	1,195
In the Isle of Man,	1	4	4,100
In the Norman Isles	1	7	734
In the West India Isles,	13	23	11,170
In the British Domi- nions in America,	13	8	1,610
In the United States of America,	109	400	60,169
Total,	360	940	180,751

July 28, 1800, the fifty-seventh conference began in London : Mr. James Wood was president, and Mr. Bradburn, secretary. This conference recommended to the quarterly meetings, where it was not already done, to raise the preachers' quarterly allowance to four pounds. And it was remarkable for a Loyal Address to the King, which the London Gazette, of August 8, 1800, said, " His Majesty was pleased to receive very graciously."

July 27, 1801, the fifty-eighth conference began in Leeds : Mr. John Pawson was elected president, (being the second time he was chosen to that office,) and Dr. Coke, secretary. At this conference, it was determined that a general public collection should be made for the missions, which had chiefly till now been supported by private subscriptions. And it was agreed also, that all our ordinary deficiencies should be paid at the district-meetings, which, till now, had been done only at the conferences. The conference broke up above seventeen

Some useful resolutions passed by the Conference.

hundred pounds in debt, after having drawn a large sum from the Book-room, owing to the great demands made upon it by the poorer circuits. The embarrassments now felt were partly on account of two short harvests with which Providence was pleased to afflict this country in 1799 and 1800. The people had been impoverished by the high price of bread, and could not support the preachers as they otherwise would have done.

The fifty-ninth conference sat July 26, 1802, in Bristol. Mr. Joseph Taylor was the president, and Dr. Coke, secretary. A few cases of impropriety had been pointed out which induced the conference to make the following resolutions :

“1. We exhort the preachers’ wives to dress as becometh those who profess to walk with God ; and we direct their husbands to use all the influence of love and piety in this behalf.

“2. We insist upon it, that the preachers set the best example in dress and every thing else.

“3. We recommend to our people to kneel at prayer.

“4. To stand while singing.

“5. Let preachers’ wives and children attend the preaching at every opportunity.”

This conference determined also, that preachers proposed to travel, should be examined before the brethren at the district-meetings ; and it passed many useful and necessary regulations in respect to the West India missionaries.

July 25, 1803, the sixtieth conference began in Manchester : Mr. Joseph Bradford was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—This conference declared very strongly against the practice of exhorters, or local preachers, obtaining licences to escape parish-offices, or from being ballotted to serve in the militia.†

† See the General Rules.

Various regulations made by the conference—Expulsion of Mr. Cook.

July 30, 1804, the sixty-first conference began in London: Mr. Henry Moore was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—This year a committee was appointed to manage the missions; whereas formerly they had been chiefly conducted by Dr. Coke: and the doctor was appointed General Superintendent of all our missions. This conference, convinced that individuals petitioning for preachers, had a direct tendency to destroy by degrees, the itinerant plan, resolved that no petition should be attended to, but what came from a regular quarterly meeting.

July 29, 1805, the sixty-second conference began at Sheffield, being the first ever held in that town. The people with great affection, and at no small expense, did their utmost to accommodate the preachers that attended. Dr. Coke was president, and Mr. Joseph Benson, secretary.—At this conference, some excellent rules were made, and some of an inferior nature. It was agreed, that the district committees should not interfere with stationing the preachers; that no letters concerning stations should be regarded, except what came from a majority at a regular quarterly meeting: and that letters coming from committees should have no more attention paid to them than those coming from individuals; but that letters from the quarterly meetings should be first read in the stationing committee, and then in the conference.

The conference, commiserating the situation of preachers with families, stationed in poor circuits, recommended to all the circuits to give them a regular weekly board. It concluded this year above 800*l.* in debt.

July 28, 1806, the sixty-third conference began in Leeds: Mr. (now Dr.) Adam Clarke was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—The most remarkable transaction was the expulsion of Mr. Joseph Cook. He had been

Several important rules passed by the Conference.

accused at the preceding conference, of holding and preaching unsound doctrines; particularly respecting the nature of faith, and the witness of the Spirit. A year was allowed him to re-consider the matter; and then, to state his sentiments; in the mean time he was required to keep his peculiar notions to himself, which he promised to do. But in a few months after, he published two sermons on these subjects. Many of the brethren still wished to save him; but he was so obstinate, that without great inconsistency and impropriety, the conference could not continue to employ him. He settled in Rochdale, and soon finished his course, dying in March, 1811. The chapel which his friends had built for him, is now occupied by our connexion.

July 27, 1807, the sixty-fourth conference began in Liverpool, (which was the first time of a conference being held there,) Mr. John Barber was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—Some important rules were passed, admirably calculated to preserve purity of doctrine and morals in the connexion; amongst which is the following: “No person shall, on any account, be permitted to retain any official situation in our societies, who holds opinions contrary to the total depravity of human nature: the divinity and atonement of Christ; the influence and witness of the Holy Spirit; and Christian holiness, as believed and taught by the Methodists.”

It was expected that we should have seriously and maturely considered some previous discussions of the different district-meetings on the subject of a plan for educating the young preachers; and also respecting articles of faith, or a summary of our doctrines, which it was proposed to prepare and publish. But for these things we found no time.

This conference wisely enforced a former rule, “That no charge brought by one preacher against another, in

Collection for the British and Foreign Bible Society.

the same district, shall be heard in the conference, unless previously explained at the district-meeting, if the matter alleged in such charge was then in existence; and that all charges shall be previously announced, personally, or in writing, to the brother against whom they are directed."

It was agreed also, that a collection should be made in all our congregations for the support of that excellent institution, *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, which was done accordingly, and the sum collected amounted to about 1,300*l.*†

July 25, 1808, the sixty-fifth conference commenced its labours in Bristol; Mr. James Wood was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—This conference was a very laborious one to those who took the most active part in its business. About two hundred and fifty preachers attended; and some part of the time the weather was extremely hot. But a conference more free from all undue influence and party spirit, where more impartiality, free discussion, good temper, and general satisfaction prevailed, we never had.

On Monday, July 31, 1809, our sixty-sixth conference began in Manchester, and continued till Thursday, August the 17th. Mr. Thomas Taylor was the president, and Mr. Joseph Benson, secretary. We had many things which called for thankfulness: but upon the whole, it was rather a trying, as well as tedious conference.

The state of our finances at this time was truly alarming, as we found a deficiency in the contingent fund of 3,019*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.* This gave occasion to the conference to resolve, that no larger sum than *thirty pounds*, shall ever be allowed for furniture to any one house; that the yearly subscription, after being made as usual in the classes, shall be mentioned in our principal congrega-

† See Methodist Magazine for 1808.

Case of Brighthouse Chapel.

tions, that such of our hearers as are not in society, and wish to be *fellow-helpers to the truth*, may have an opportunity; and that before the deficiencies brought from any circuit be paid at the district-meeting, inquiry shall be made whether such circuit has complied with our rules respecting contributions, by raising *on the average*, one penny per week, and one shilling per quarter, for each member. If it appear that the rules have not been complied with, the payment of the deficiencies must be suspended, and the case submitted to the decision of the conference.

It was agreed also, that the district-meetings should present a plan to the conference for stationing the children, to enable the conference to determine what number should be supported by each circuit. But, though this plan has repeatedly been agreed upon, the execution of it is still delayed.

The conference also strongly recommended to all Methodist families, to set apart some time every Lord's-day, for catechising and instructing their children.

To prevent any local preacher from obtaining a licence with a view to escape parish-offices, and the militia, the conference a second time determined, that any person who should apply for a licence, without the previous knowledge and consent of the superintendent and his colleagues, and of the local preachers, or quarterly meeting of the circuit in which he resides, should not be suffered to preach among us.

It will not be improper here to introduce the following subject, which occurred at this time. It is a circumstance well known to many, that when Mr. Kilham, and his party, separated from the connexion, they took possession of several of our chapels, though they were settled upon *the conference plan*. After enduring this outrageous wrong for some years, it was determined to make an

Decree of the Master of the Rolls

appeal to the court of Chancery, selecting the case of Brighthouse chapel, near Halifax, principally with a view to try the general question. On the 5th day of March, 1810, the cause was heard and determined before the Master of the Rolls. It was decreed, "That, as what was now called in the pleadings, for the sake of distinction, The Old Conference, was the *only* conference which existed, at the time of the execution of the trust-deed, and for many years afterward, it must be determined to be that conference only, which was referred to in the deed. And as the trustees had not reserved, by any clause in the deed, power of making new regulations, by any decision of a majority of themselves, they must be compelled to execute the trust according to the laws and regulations of that conference, for the use of which they held the trust-estate, and admit those preachers only who were sent by the old conference." This decision is of the more importance, as there are several other chapels in the same circumstances.

*A Copy of the minutes of the Decree made by the
Master of the Rolls.*

Monday, March 5th, 1810.

Attorney General ver. Pratt.

"Declare that the indenture, bearing date the 5th of July, 1795, in the pleadings stated ought to be established, and the trusts thereof performed and carried into execution; and that the chapel in the pleadings mentioned, and the affairs thereof ought to be regulated under, and by virtue of, the terms of the before-mentioned indenture: and let the defendants, Joseph Pratt, James Avison, John Sowden, and John Booth, permit and suffer the person or persons as shall be nominated and appointed by the yearly conference, mentioned and

respecting Brighthouse Chapel.

referred to in the said deed, and under the pleadings called the Old Conference, to enter into, and upon, have, use, and enjoy the said chapel for the several purposes in the said indenture of the 5th day of July, 1795, particularly mentioned; and refer it to the Master to take an account of the rents of the several pews, seats, and other profits of the said chapel, and the premises in the said indenture mentioned, come to the hands of the said defendants, Joseph Pratt, James Avison, John Sowden, and John Booth, and of the application thereof. In the taking of which account the said Master is to make unto the parties such allowance for what has been already paid to the officiating minister, for the duty done in the said chapel: and the said Master is to inquire and state to the court what monies have been laid out and advanced by the plaintiff, John Sharp, for the building of the three messuages in the pleadings mentioned, and of the interest accrued due thereon, and under what agreement such monies were so laid out; and for the better taking of the said accounts, and discovery of the matters aforesaid, the parties are to produce before the said Master upon oath, all books, papers, and writings in their custody, or power, relating thereto, and are to be examined upon interrogatories, as the said Master shall direct, who, in taking of the said accounts, is to make unto the parties all just allowances, and reserve the consideration of the costs of this suit, and of all further directions, until after the Master shall have made his report, and any of the parties are to be at liberty to apply to this court, as there shall be occasion." In consequence of this decision, the chapel at Brighthouse was recovered to the connection, and several others were returned to us in virtue of that determination.

Monday, July 30, 1810, the sixty-seventh conference opened in London, Mr. Benson being the president, and

Petitions against Lord Sidmouth's Bill on Toleration.

Dr. Coke the secretary. One of the most remarkable circumstances attending this conference, was, a serious apprehension, that difficulties and troubles were approaching, from the continued designs evidently meditating against the full enjoyment of the *Act of Toleration*. Some endeavoured to persuade themselves, that those who were forging chains for us, were highly honourable and good men, and meant us no evil. A few months, however, manifested what might have fully convinced the most incredulous of the contrary. But the Lord sitteth above the water-floods; the Lord remaineth a king for ever. The Methodists had abundant reason to say in the language of the cxxiv. Psalm, *If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may Israel say; if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us; then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*"

In May, 1811, Lord Sidmouth brought his long-expected and memorable Bill into the House of Lords. On the minds of the Dissenters and Methodists, and on a great part of the public, it produced the effects it ought to have done. Almost in an instant, 620 petitions were presented against it, and one of these was signed by 4000 names. The time was so short, that petitions could not be procured from places more than one hundred and twenty miles distant from London, otherwise many thousands, most numerous signed, would have been presented in a very few days. The bill was read the second

Number of licensed Teachers, Chapels, &c.

time, May 11, 1811. Several noble lords opposed the bill in a strain of eloquence that will do them lasting honour. Lord Erskine moved, that the bill should be read a second time that day six months, (the common method of throwing out an obnoxious bill;) and after some of the advocates of the bill, had apologized for their conduct in the best manner they could, Lord Erskine's motion was carried without a division.

It may not be improper to remark, that between this and the preceding session of parliament, inquiry had been made respecting the number of licensed teachers, in each year, from 1760 to 1810. And the total number, licensed during the last half century, was 3672. The number of chapels, licensed, including small rooms, during the same period, was 12,161. Returns were also made by the archbishops and bishops, of the number of churches and chapels, belonging to the church of England, in every parish containing a thousand persons and upwards; and of the number of places of worship, not of the establishment. The comparative number excited the surprize of many, there being a majority of 910 not of the establishment. The total number of churches and chapels of the church of England, amounted to 2547; and of chapels and meeting-houses, not of the establishment 3457, besides many private houses, in which was preaching, &c. which were not included.

When the enemies of religious liberty, found they could not obtain a new act that would abridge the provisions of the Act of Toleration, a vigorous attempt was made to introduce such a new practical construction of the old law, as to answer all the intended purposes of the projected new one. In addition to the usual oaths, it was required of persons applying for licences, that they should prove, that they were ministers of certain separate

New construction of the Act of Toleration.

congregations. This new interpretation of an old law, bore principally upon the Methodist preachers, and on Dissenting ministers who served several congregations, and on candidates for the ministry; hence it was determined to make application to the government for relief. They had no very sanguine hopes of success: but prayer was made continually by the church of Christ, and the Lord helping them, they succeeded beyond their expectation; the arm of persecution was staid, and increased liberty and security, became the inheritance of the pious in the land.

As this new law, in favour of religious liberty in England, may be found in other publications, and is so well known, I forbear to swell this volume by the insertion of it. I would just make one remark, which I do not know that any other writer has made, and that is, that the political affairs of our nation, as well as those of Europe in general, immediately after the passing of the new toleration act, began to change for the better.

SECT. XII.

Of Woodhouse-Grove School, and Conclusion of the Chronological History.

JULY 29, 1811, the sixty-eighth conference began in Sheffield, when Mr. Charles Atmore was elected president, and Dr. Coke secretary. At this conference, three several proposals were made for a second school for the education of the preacher's sons. A certain house, then upon sale at Mansfield, (a drawing of which was laid before the conference,) was recommended. A

Resolutions of the Conference relative to Woodhouse-Grove School.

second proposal was made by the Leeds district meeting, of which Mr. Atmore was the chairman. They proposed erecting a large new school at Bramley, about four miles west of Leeds; upon an estate of land, already purchased by some friends with a view to the business. The third proposal came from the Halifax district meeting, of which the author of this publication was the chairman. When that district was holding its annual sitting at Bradford, the first week in July, Mr. Fawcett, of that place, suggested that there was an estate upon sale in the neighbourhood, that would suit admirably for a school for us, and that it might be bought very cheap. The district committee deputed three of their members to go and inspect this estate at Woodhouse-Grove. They returned with a report, of a very flattering kind. This report was laid before the conference, who after a long debate, finally determined that the estate at Woodhouse-Grove should be purchased. The vote was taken by ballot, and carried by a large majority. The conference then came to the following resolutions: viz.

“ 1. That it is highly expedient to provide an additional school, without delay, for the education of those sons of preachers, who cannot be admitted at Kingswood, or whose fathers may prefer another situation to that of Kingswood.

“ 2. That the house and estate of Woodhouse-Grove, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, are the most eligible that have been offered for this purpose: and that they be immediately purchased on behalf of the conference, by the president.

“ 3. That the premises thus to be purchased, shall be designated, in honour of our venerable father in the gospel, *The Wesleyan Academy* at Woodhouse-Grove.

“ 4. That the estate, when purchased, shall be legally

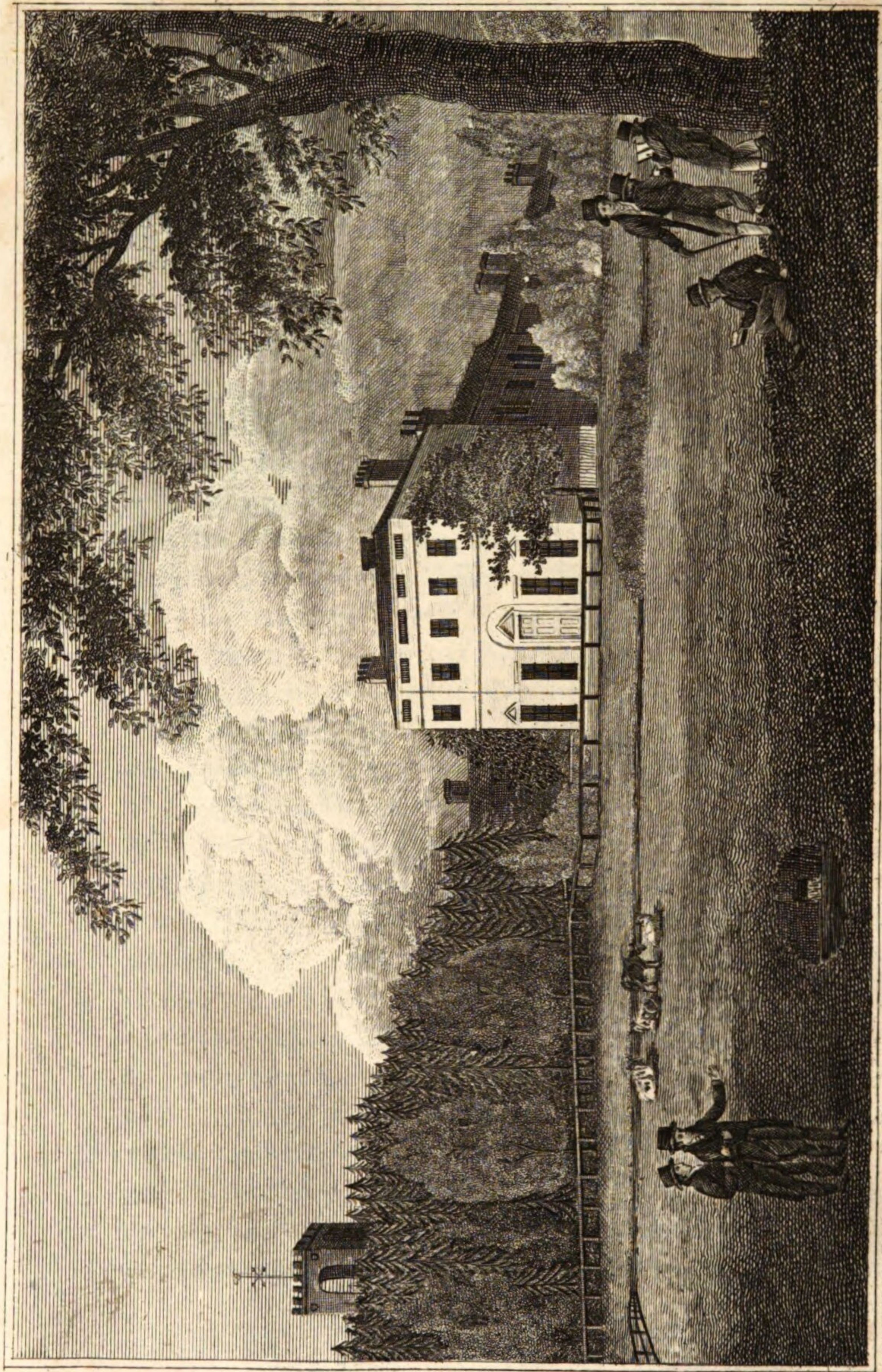
Resolutions of the Conference, continued.

conveyed to twenty-three trustees, on behalf of the conference; and that the following brethren shall be the trustees, viz. James Wood, Dr. Coke, Joseph Benson, Henry Moore, Joseph Taylor, Adam Clarke, John Barber, Charles Atmore, James Bogie, Walter Griffith, Jonathan Crowther, John Gaulter, George Highfield, William Bramwell, Richard Reece, Joseph Entwisle, Thomas Wood, John Stamp, Samuel Taylor, John Stephens, George Marsden, Jabez Bunting, Robert Newton.

“ 5. That a committee shall be appointed to superintend the fitting-up and furnishing of the academy, and to prepare it for the purposes of education;—that the said committee shall consist of the following preachers and others; viz. The president and secretary, James Wood, Charles Gloyne, George Marsden, George Gibbon, John Nelson, John Stamp, Thomas Bartholomew, John Kershaw, Alexander Suter, Jabez Bunting, Richard Waddy, Miles Martindale, Robert Newton, William Ratcliffe, and Thomas Fletcher; Mr. B. Sadler of Leeds; Mr. William Child of Green-gates, Mr. John Ashworth of Halifax; Mr. Fawcett of Bradford; Mr. Haley of Bramley; and Mr. Holdsworth of Wakefield; and that Mr. James Wood shall be *chairman* and *treasurer* of this committee; and Messrs. Kershaw and Marsden, *joint secretaries*.

“ 6. That a subscription be immediately opened by the preachers now present; and that the chairman of the committee shall be directed to send a circular letter to every absent preacher, requesting him, in the name of the conference, to contribute a sum not less than one guinea, (and more if his circumstances will permit) towards the intended purchase.

“ 7. That the superintendents shall be directed, in the said circular letter, to make immediate application for the same purpose, to our principal friends in their re-



C. BETHUNE WORTH. SCULPT.

J. K. HODGKINSON. DRA.

The Wesleyan Academy at Woodhouse Grove.
near LEEDS YORKSHIRE.

Situation of Woodhouse-Grove—Number of Boys.

spective circuits, and to forward the monies which may be raised, to Mr. Wood, at Leeds.

“ 8. That lists of the subscribers shall be published from time to time, on the cover of the Methodist magazines.”

Before the conference broke up, it was proposed, that the preachers present should set an example to their brethren and the connexion, by subscribing towards the purchase: and though only 102 remained, 428*l.* 15*s.* was instantly subscribed. The absent preachers were written to, and requested to contribute according to their ability; and an address was circulated through the connexion, soliciting the assistance of our more opulent friends.

Woodhouse-Grove is a most inviting abode, having a very good and commodious house, with spacious out-buildings, good gardens, a cold bath, and an observatory. It is beautifully situated in a fine fruitful vale, at a small distance from the river Aire; and a canal, which communicates with the German Ocean, and all the commercial neighbourhood. The whole premises include rather more than fifteen acres of excellent land. It is 9 miles W. of Leeds, between 3 and 4 N. of Bradford, and about 6 S. of Otley. The premises were purchased by order of the conference, for 4575*l.* But the conveyance, alterations, additionals, furniture, &c. brought the whole expense to more than 7000*l.* and the subscriptions of the preachers and friends raised the whole sum, within about 300*l.*

There are now about 70 boys at Woodhouse-Grove, which was opened, Jan. 8, 1812; and about 50 at Kingswood school.

While Woodhouse-Grove has furnished a great additional convenience to those preachers who have boys, it has, at the same time, augmented the difficulties of the conference in pecuniary matters. A public collection

Address to the Members and Friends of the Methodist Connexion.

which supported only *one* school, is insufficient for the support of two. This subject is stated clearly and fully in the following address, just published in behalf of the conference.

“ An Address to the Members and Friends of the Methodist Connexion.

“ The conference held at Leeds, in 1812, resolved ‘ That an address should be prepared and published, expressing the deep sense which the conference entertained of the liberality with which our friends, in general, had subscribed towards the purchase of the Methodist academy at Woodhouse-Grove, and requesting the continuance of their liberality, at the annual collections in the month of October, in order to meet the united expenses incurred by the *two* establishments at Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove.’* ”

“ Deep indeed was the sense which the preachers then entertained of the liberality of our friends ; and very lively does their gratitude still remain. Friends and brethren, much as we loved you, and highly as we thought of you before, your generosity upon that interesting occasion, raised you in our esteem, and increased our affectionate attachment to you. Your cheerful display of liberality gave ample proof of your love to us ; and this was the more pleasing, as we considered it as a mark of your love to that gospel, in propagating which, we employ our time and talents. We thank you for that token of your love, and fervently pray, that the richest blessings of heaven may rest upon you, your children, and your children’s children, through time and eternity.

“ At a very early period of Methodism, its great Founder saw the necessity of a general school for the education of

* See Minutes of 1812, p. 49.

Address continued.

the children of the preachers, and erected that at Kingswood. But such was the continual and rapid increase of the connexion, that, for several years before Mr. Wesley's death, he was convinced that a second school was become necessary. And since he was taken away from us, the conference have repeatedly expressed an opinion in favour of an additional school, and that its situation should be in Yorkshire. After surveying and considering several proposed situations, the conference of 1811, gave a decided preference to Woodhouse-Grove; and the choice met with the general approbation of the connexion. But, friends and brethren, this new establishment, considerably larger than that of Kingswood, which is continued upon nearly its former scale, requires a large additional support. Hence, the debt on account of both is already considerable.

“The conference, after paying serious and deliberate attention to the subject, thought the best method of making the income equal to the expenditure would be, to request the several congregations to give liberally to the public collections, and, in addition to this, to entreat our more opulent and generous friends, to favour us with private annual subscriptions or donations. And we cannot doubt that many of them will cheerfully comply with this request. The names of those who do so, with the sum subscribed by each, will be published in the annual minutes of the conference.

“Dear friends and brethren, *our* calling is not only laborious, but frequently very trying, and in nothing more so, than when we are obliged to exert ourselves in an extraordinary way, to support the great work of God in which we are engaged.

“With respect to the object of the present address, permit us to say, that we are not seeking worldly dignity or riches for our children, but simply food, raiment, and a

Address continued.

suitable education for them, from eight to fourteen years of age. We think our request to be just, reasonable, and scriptural; and we hope you will see the matter in the same light. At the great day of account, when our toils, and your labours of love will have closed for ever, we are persuaded that your having complied with our request, will rank among the first of the good works of those, to whom the Judge will say, '*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom.*' Friends and brethren, help us to support and educate our offspring, and we will gladly spend and be spent in your service; and our children shall rise up after us, and call you blessed.

"We shall conclude this short address, in the words of our venerable Father in the gospel, when speaking of Kingswood school:—'*In whatever view we look upon this, it is one of the noblest charities that can be conceived. How reasonable is the institution! Is it fit that the children of those who leave wife and all that is dear, to save souls from death, should want what is needful either for soul or body? Ought not we to supply what the parent cannot, because of his labours in the gospel? How excellent are the effects of this institution! The preacher eased of this weight can the more cheerfully go on in his labour: and perhaps many of these children may hereafter fill up the place of those that shall rest from their labours. You who wish well to the work of God, who long to see sinners converted to God, and the kingdom of Christ set up in all the earth; all of you who are thus minded have an opportunity of shewing your love to the gospel. Now promote, as far as in you lies, one of the noblest charities in the world. Now forward, as you are able, one of the most excellent designs that ever was set on foot in this kingdom. Do what you can to comfort the parents who give up their all for you, and to give their children cause to bless you; you will be no poorer for*

Proceedings at the Leeds Conference in 1812.

what you do on such an occasion : God is a good paymaster. And you know, in doing this, you lend unto the Lord : in due time he shall pay you again.'”

On the 27th of July, 1812, the sixty-ninth conference began in Leeds, and continued till August the 13th : Mr. Joseph Entwisle was chosen president, and Dr. Coke secretary.—I shall just remark here, that the new Toleration Act finally passed the House of Lords on the same day that the conference began, and was signed by the Prince Regent a few days after. Mr. Allan, solicitor, of London, and Joseph Butterworth, Esq. attended this conference, and gratified the preachers, and other friends, by reciting the various steps they had taken, (as agents of the connexion,) in bringing the important business before parliament, and steering it through many and great difficulties, till it reached such a happy conclusion.

During this conference, and especially on the sundays, immense crowds of Methodists from the neighbouring circuits, attended the preachings at the different chapels ; and on one sunday in particular, the crowds were so great, beyond what the chapels could contain, that it became necessary for ten or eleven preachers, at the same hour, in different parts of the town, to address the multitudes in the open air.

July the 28th, 1813, the seventieth conference commenced their usual labours in Liverpool, and sat eighteen days. Mr. Walter Griffith was president, and Dr. Coke, secretary.—There were many circumstances in the affairs of the connexion calculated to encourage the preachers ; and it was a conference of great peace and harmony. But, though we had often been embarrassed in pecuniary matters before, nothing in former times would bear a comparison with this alarming crisis. One great cause

Address to the Trustees of Chapels,

of our embarrassment was, the employing so many men in the home missions, and then throwing the circuits they had formed, and which were not able to support their own expences, upon the contingent funds, for the supply of their deficiencies. Another cause was the making so many poor circuits out of the inferior parts of good ones. These circuits, thus formed, generally become burdensome to the conference. A third cause of our embarrassment, and perhaps the greatest cause of all, was the having given more than a due proportion of travelling preachers to many circuits, in which the number of the people is but small. As one method of relief out of the present difficulty, the conference addressed the trustees as follows :

“ To the Trustees of the Chapels in the Methodist Connexion.

“ Dear Friends and Brethren,

“ Many of you feel yourselves to be highly honoured by being made, in your official capacity, pillars in the temple of God. The conference have been long and deeply sensible of your importance and value. And it has been, in a great measure, from a desire to serve and accommodate the numerous chapels built by our friends, for which you are put in trust, that we have, especially for some of the last years, called out and employed so many additional preachers. This has, however, very much contributed to bring us into great and unexampled difficulties in temporal matters. After painfully feeling our circumstances, as a connexion, and looking this way and that for help, our attention has been directed to you. The deficiencies, ordinary and extraordinary, including the debt of the last year, exceed the yearly subscription and the profits of the book-room, about five thousand pounds. After mature consideration, it has appeared to us to be just and

relative to the Embarrassments of the Connexion.

proper to make a friendly and earnest application to you, and to request your assistance in this time of difficulty and distress. The conference have done much, at different periods and in different ways, to serve and please the trustees. Many of you will be glad of an opportunity of manifesting your gratitude. You are our brethren and fellow-helpers in the gospel; and as such we intreat you to come forward in the hour of need, and to make a christian and brotherly offering, for the relief of the connexion, of such a sum of money, arising from the income of the seats of your respective chapels, as you may think proper. Permit us to remark, that this would only be helping the connexion by a little of the produce of our labour. It is by the preaching of the blessed gospel in the chapels, that the income of the seat-rents is created; and, therefore, such a portion of that income as can be spared, ought, in justice, to be brought forward, in aid of the weekly and quarterly contributions of our societies, towards the support of the Christian ministry.

“ We have confidence in you, that you will seriously consider this application; and that the assistance, which you will voluntarily and promptly afford will be such as effectually to deliver the Methodist connexion from the greatest pecuniary embarrassment which it ever felt, and enable the messengers of Christ to go on their way rejoicing.

“ Signed in behalf, and by order of the conference,

“ WALTER GRIFFITH, *President.*

“ THOMAS COKE, *Secretary.*

“ *Liverpool, August 12, 1813.*”

To prevent the recurrence of similar embarrassments, the conference issued the following circular, and dispersed it through the kingdom:

Address to the Stewards of the Methodist Societies,

"To the Stewards of the Methodist Circuits and Societies.

"Very dear Brethren,

"The present pecuniary embarrassments of our connexion render an address to you necessary. The deficiencies, ordinary and extraordinary, including the debt of the last year, exceed the Yearly Subscription and the profits of the Book-Room about five thousand pounds. These embarrassments are likely to be annual and accumulative, unless our general expenses be diminished, and our general income increased. The conference has done something in both these ways; and now applies to the Stewards for their assistance, in order to complete its plans. The Stewards are therefore earnestly entreated,

"1. To make such exertions, in conjunction with the leaders, as will raise in their respective circuits, *at least* the sums required by our old established rules; namely, on the average one penny per week, to be paid in the classes, and one shilling per quarter to be paid when the tickets are renewed, for each member;

"2. To provide as much as possible for *additional married preachers*, where single preachers are now stationed. Imperious necessity has compelled the conference to adopt, as a general principle, the following rule, 'That in future, married preachers shall be appointed to every circuit *in proportion to the number of members.*' And it appears, on a fair calculation, that on this principle, one married preacher ought to be sent, where there are 450 members; two where there are 900; three where there are 1,350, and so on. Our friends are therefore entreated, where it is not already the case, to act on this principle, by making preparation against the next conference for married instead of single preachers.

relative to the embarrassed state of the Connexion.

“ 3. To take upon themselves, as far as possible, all the expenses of their respective circuits, and to send to the district meetings, or conference, as few demands as may be, either for ordinaries or extraordinaries; and, if practicable, no demands at all.

“ The conference is fully sensible, that in some of the circuits every thing is already done, which can be reasonably expected; and there are a few circuits, which, considering their numbers, exert themselves in a manner eminently praise-worthy. Their local circumstances have appeared to require a greater number of travelling preachers, than are usually sent to circuits so small, in other parts of the kingdom. And, feeling the peculiarity of their situation, they have proportionably increased their weekly and quarterly subscriptions, so as not merely to comply with our rules, but very far to exceed what those rules require. This conduct is just and laudable. But there are other circuits which are very deficient in their contributions, and which consequently remain, from year to year, a burden upon our general funds. If this evil cannot be remedied in some considerable degree, the conference will be under the painful necessity of declining to send to such circuits any more preachers, whether married or single, than they can undertake to support.

“ As one source of our embarrassments appears to be the multiplication of single preachers in circuits which ought to make provision for families, the conference has agreed, that no additional single preacher be sent in future to any circuit, unless such circuit engages to support an additional married preacher instead of the single preacher so allowed, at the end of four years at farthest.

“ And now, dear brethren, as we consider that your hearts are much engaged in the good work of God, and you know that his cause cannot be supported without pecuniary aid, we do earnestly entreat you to employ

Dr. Coke and other missionaries sail for the East Indies.

your utmost energies, in raising the necessary supplies. We have nothing in view in soliciting your help, but the glory of God; and we are fully satisfied that your assistance in these matters will contribute to that end.

“Signed in behalf, and by order of the conference,

“WALTER GRIFFITH, *President.*

“THOMAS COKE, *Secretary.*

“*Liverpool, August 12, 1813.*”

On the last day of the year 1813, the Rev. Dr. Coke sailed for the Cape of Good Hope, and the island of Ceylon, taking with him six missionaries, viz. Messrs. James Lynch, William Ault, George Erskine, William M. Harvard, Thomas Squance, and Benjamin Clough; John Mc Kenny sailed in a private ship for the Cape. After a voyage of five months and a few days, in which they had to encounter a variety of storms and adverse winds, the six missionaries who accompanied Dr. Coke, arrived at Bombay on the 21st of May, 1814; and on the 15th of June, sailed for Ceylon, the place of their destination. Mrs. Ault, who was in a declining state of health when she left England, died on the passage, the 9th of February, in full prospect of a blissful immortality. And on the 3rd of May, in the morning, to the inexpressible grief of all the missionaries, the Rev. Dr. Coke was found dead in his cabin! None on board enjoyed a better state of health than he, during the first four months of the voyage. On the 1st of May, he was a little indisposed, but said that he apprehended his complaint to be no more than a little weakness, which would go off in a few days. On the 2nd he was worse; but sat down to table, and walked as usual. In the evening, he walked on the deck, before he retired to rest. Mr. Clough, one of the missionaries, accompanied him into his room, and, at his request, gave him a little opening medicine from his chest, and offer-

Mr. De Kerpezdron visits France as a missionary.

ed to render him every other service in his power. But the Doctor, not apprehensive of any immediate danger, with his wonted sweetness of spirit and manner, desired him to go to bed, shook hands with him, and commended him to God. Thus ended our dear friend's intercourse with mortals!—for in the morning he was found a corpse! It is supposed that he died about midnight of an apoplexy, a species of complaint to which his constitution seemed disposed.

In the first quarter of the year 1814, after the allied armies had over-run a considerable part of France, captured Paris, compelled Napoleon Bonaparte to abdicate the thrones of France and Italy, and submit to banishment in the island of Elba, a general peace between all the powers of Europe took place.

Sanguine hopes were now entertained, that there would be great openings for spreading the gospel, especially in France. Many of the French prisoners of war, to whom our missionaries had preached in the prison-ships, (and as they hoped, with success,) expressed great thankfulness upon their return home; and signified a wish to see the missionaries in their own country. Many of them gave the missionaries their address, that they might call upon them in case they should visit France. Circumstances bore so fair a promise for introducing Methodism, or vital christianity, into France, that Mr. Armand De Kerpezdron, a native of France, under the direction of our missionary committee, visited various places in that country, in the beginning of summer. But he met with much disappointment and discouragement. Of the many who had appeared to be much profited by his preaching to them when prisoners, and who had expressed so much affection for him, some would scarcely know him; others displayed great coldness and indifference; and hardly one of them gave him the least en-

couragement to preach. Mr. De Kerpezdron found no opening to preach in France, except among a few small societies, in Normandy, which some of our preachers, who had gone from the Norman Isles, had formed some years before. Whatever good the counter-revolution in France may be productive of in other respects, it promises but little in favour of true, scriptural religion; and the same observation will apply to Spain and Italy. This circumstance prevents some persons from having any confidence in the durability of the present state of things in those countries.

On Monday, July 25, 1814, the seventy-first conference, began in Bristol, and continued till the evening of Wednesday the 10th of August. Dr. Adam Clarke was chosen president, and Mr. Jabez Bunting, secretary. Prior to the choosing of these officers, it was agreed, (contrary to former practice,) that all who shall have travelled fourteen years, shall vote in the choice of the president and secretary. All such, who were present, voted by ballot, along with the legalized hundred.* Dr. Clarke had a great majority of votes. But to cut off all objections, and to preserve inviolable the Deed of Declaration, the members of the hundred, who were present, then voted by ballot, themselves alone, and were unanimous in confirming the choice before made.

At the same time, it was agreed, that whereas we had formerly filled up the vacancies in the hundred, according to seniority in the candidates, that henceforth, when there are four vacancies, three of these shall be filled up by seniority, and the fourth by the ballot of the conference, without regard to seniority. It was upon this ground, that Mr. Bunting was chosen a member of the hundred, and thereby became eligible to the office of principal secretary to the conference.

* See page 76, ante.

Establishment of Missionary Societies.

The Conference recommended the immediate establishment of a Methodist Missionary Society, in every district of the kingdom, on the plan of those societies which had been formed in Yorkshire and elsewhere, during the past year. Meetings of this description had been held in our chapels at Leeds, Halifax, York, Hull, Sheffield, Redruth, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and were very numerous attended. In general, some respectable member of the society, was called to the chair. The business being previously arranged, each person had his task assigned him, as to what motion he should make or second; the speakers consisting of travelling and local preachers, and private members. The object being important, considerable interest was excited; many of the orators spoke well, the auditors applauded, and liberal subscriptions were made. The proceedings altogether bore a striking resemblance to the annual meetings of auxiliary Bible societies.

A meeting was held at the chapel, City-road, on the 1st of December, for the purpose of forming a Methodist Missionary Society for the London district. Dr. Adam Clarke being called to the chair, introduced the business by a very impressive speech, which evinced great literary research, learning, and ability. Various resolutions, calculated to effect the purposes of the meeting, (which was very numerous attended,) were successively proposed, and unanimously carried. Meetings of the same kind have since been held in various parts of the London district; as well as in many other parts of the kingdom; and there is no doubt but in a short time they will become general throughout Methodism. And by this means, it is hoped, that the loss of Dr. Coke will be supplied, and considerable pecuniary aid will be obtained in support of the successful, numerous, and widely-extended missions, now under the direction of the Conference,

Address of the Methodist Conference

The conference resolved, "That a dutiful address should be presented to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, assuring him of their loyal and affectionate attachment to the person, family, and government of our venerable sovereign, expressive of their gratitude for their religious privileges, and for the restoration of peace to the nations of Europe; and earnestly intreating that his Royal Highness would be pleased to use his utmost endeavours in order to prevent the threatened revival of the African slave-trade, and to secure the immediate and universal abolition of that most inhuman and unchristian traffic." The Address is as follows :

"To His Royal Highness George, Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

"The humble Address of the Ministers of the People called Methodists, belonging to the religious societies, first established by the Rev. John Wesley, deceased.

"May it please your Royal Highness,

"WE, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Ministers of the People called Methodists, belonging to the Religious Societies first established by the Rev. John Wesley, deceased, beg leave most humbly to approach your Royal Highness, and to offer to you our heartfelt congratulations on the happy termination of the late sanguinary and protracted war, and on the restoration of peace, among the various nations which compose the great European family.

"In the astonishing events which have led to these auspicious results, we devoutly recognize the special agency of that Almighty Being, who doeth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and who, in the recent dispensations of His Providence,

to the Prince Regent.

has made it signally manifest, that those who walk in pride He is able to abase.

“We gladly avail ourselves of this opportunity to assure your Royal Highness, that both we and the numerous societies whom we represent, are firmly and unalterably attached to the excellent Constitution of our Country; and that in sentiments of most loyal and affectionate respect for the Person, the Family, and the Government of our venerable Sovereign, we are not behind any other class of His Majesty’s subjects. His long affliction we have sincerely lamented; and for his present and eternal welfare we incessantly pray. For your Royal Highness also, we offer up to God our continual supplications, that His best blessings may rest on yourself and on your Regency; that you may be his minister for good to this nation and to mankind; and that after having long lived at the head of a free, faithful, and prosperous people, you may finally receive a crown of righteousness, which fadeth not away.

“With our prayers, we shall not fail to continue as we have ever done, our strenuous exhortations to the people of our charge; that they may be taught, both by our precepts and example, while they fear God, to honour the King, and to adorn our holy religion by an uniformly peaceable demeanor, and by a cheerful subjection to lawful authority.

“In these principles of Christian loyalty, we were, as a religious body, carefully instructed by the Founder of our Societies—they are embodied in our standing rules of discipline, and we are confirmed in our adherence to them, by our thankful recollection of the privileges which we enjoy. Those privileges we consider as greatly enlarged and secured, by a recent statute, entitled “An Act to repeal certain Acts, and amend other Acts, relating to religious worship and assemblies, and persons

Address continued.

teaching or preaching therein." For this extension and establishment of religious liberty, we are solicitous to express our warmest gratitude to your Royal Highness, under whose councils the measure was introduced into Parliament, and unanimously passed into a law. And while we are thus acknowledging our own obligations, we cannot omit to advert, with similar feelings of respectful and grateful satisfaction, to the legal facilities which are now afforded to pious persons of all denominations, for the peaceable diffusion of the manifold blessings of Christianity, in those populous countries which compose the British empire in India.

"We cannot, however, conceal from your Royal Highness, that amidst the many occasions of congratulation and thankfulness which late events have produced, there is one subject, which as men, as Christians, and as Ministers of the Gospel of Peace, we can contemplate with no other emotions than those of the deepest regret. We refer to that article of the treaty with France, from which it appears, that the influence of your Royal Highness has not obtained, as yet, the consent of the French government, to abandon their purpose of reviving the Slave Trade.

"The renewal of that detestable traffic, under any modifications, or for any period, however limited, we most earnestly deprecate as a calamity of incalculable magnitude. The miseries in which it will involve thousands of our unoffending fellow creatures, we regard as constituting but a part of the mischief with which it is pregnant: it will operate most injuriously, if not fatally, on those benevolent plans which have been formed, and partially executed, for civilizing and christianizing the inhabitants of the African continent.

"In some of those plans, the religious community to which we belong are peculiarly interested, having for

Address continued.

some years established schools on the western coast of Africa, for the education of negro children, with encouraging appearances of ultimate success. On this ground, therefore, as well as on general principles of humanity, justice, and religion; and because we wish to see our own country at least fully rescued from the guilt of innocent blood, by the exertion of its utmost influence on this question, we are anxious that the subject should undergo such further discussion, in the approaching congress at Vienna, as may lead, we humbly trust, to that great consummation, the immediate, the universal, the unqualified abolition of the Slave Trade.

“ Impressed with these feelings, we have read with no common satisfaction, the answer of your Royal Highness to the unanimous addresses of the two Houses of Parliament on this subject, in which you were graciously pleased to intimate, that your unremitting exertions will be used to give effect to their wishes for the abolition of this trade.

“ Accept, Sir, of our most hearty thanks for this declaration, worthy of a British Prince. And may Almighty God crown your renewed exertions in a cause so holy, with complete success! May it be your high honour, and that of the nation over which you rule, to be recorded in the page of history, as the principal instruments employed by Divine Providence, first in restoring liberty and peace to Europe, and then in terminating for ever, the wrongs and the desolations of Africa.

“ Signed, by order and in behalf of the Methodist Ministers, assembled at their seventy-first Annual Conference,

“ ADAM CLARKE, President.”

Bristol, August 10, 1814.

Missionaries appointed for Botany Bay.

Dr. Clarke transmitted the address, to Lord Sidmouth, Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, to which his Lordship returned the following answer.

“ *Whitehall, 9th September, 1814.*

“ SIR,

“ I have had the honour to lay before the Prince Regent, the very loyal and dutiful address of the Ministers of the People called Methodists, belonging to the Religious Societies first established by the Rev. John Wesley, deceased, transmitted to me with your letter of the 7th instant. And I have the satisfaction to acquaint you, that His Royal Highness was pleased to receive the same in the most gracious manner.

“ I have the honor to be, Sir,

“ Your most obedient humble servant,

“ **SIDMOUTH.**”

*To the Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke,
Harpur Street.*

This conference also resolved, “ That the preachers be permitted to receive the usual allowance for their children, from the circuits, or from the contingent fund, until they attain the age of twenty years; unless, by marriage or otherwise, they shall at an earlier period become independent of their parents in point of pecuniary support.”

Among the novel events of this fertile period, may be mentioned the following. “ The Methodist Magazine for January and July 1814, presented the reader with several letters from Sydney Cove, in New South Wales, or, as it is more generally called, Botany Bay; giving an interesting account of that colony, and informing us, that Methodism is planted there; several classes having been already formed, consisting chiefly of free settlers, who have gone thither of their own free choice. These Methodists, residing in that remote region, earnestly intreat-

Number of Members in Society throughout the world.

ed us to send them one or two preachers, informing us, that they have already made provision for such preachers. The conference, upon hearing the case, resolved, that the Missionary Committee shall send two preachers to New South Wales. And thus, it is probable that little more than a year after our missionaries embarked for the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies, others may sail for Botany Bay. Nor shall I wonder if these last be more successful than those sent to India.

It appears by the information received from different parts of the United Kingdom, and from Gibraltar, Africa, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the West Indies, that the word of God has been attended with great success during the past year. The numbers in the societies, according to the GENERAL RECAPITULATION in the minutes, are as follows:

In Great Britain,	-	-	173,885
In Ireland,	-	-	29,388
In France,	-	-	14
At Gibraltar,	-	-	65
At Sierra Leone in Africa,	-	-	96
In Nova Scotia, Quebec, and } Newfoundland,			1,570
In the West Indies,	-	-	17,002
			222,020

The Methodist societies in the United States of America, in July, 1813, (the date of the last returns) included,

Whites,	-	-	171,448
Coloured People and Blacks,			42,859
			214,327
Total number of members in the Methodist societies throughout the world,			436,327

Comparative statement of Members and Preachers.

There are besides, 685 regular Travelling Preachers now stationed in Great Britain ; 56 on our Foreign Missions; 114 in Ireland ; and 678 in the American Methodist connexion: making a total number of 1533 Travelling Preachers throughout the world, and which is not included in the preceding account of the numbers in society.

In concluding this chapter, I shall present to my readers the following scale of the increase of members, and of itinerant preachers, for the last forty-four years, as they stand in the Minutes for the United Kingdom.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Preachers.</i>	<i>Members.</i>
1770	120	29,406
1780	171	44,330
1790	291	71,578
1800	364	110,067
1810	726	165,798
1814	842	203,273

The prosperity of Methodism in the United States, has, for the last ten or twelve years, somewhat eclipsed the glory at home.

One circumstance which materially contributed to the advancement and credit of Methodism on the Western Continent, was, the constancy of the preachers during the prevalence of the yellow fever. In Baltimore, and some other towns, the gentry and incumbent ministers consulted their safety by flight. The laborious Methodist preachers, whom the above class of ministers had often declaimed against as illiterate enthusiasts, not reckoning on the value of a life short and uncertain, found themselves in the peaceable possession of whole cities, and they served the flock till they were almost dead with labour. Yea, and God, whose care is always over the righteous, wonderfully preserved their lives.

CHAPTER II.

**THE DOCTRINES BELIEVED AND TAUGHT
BY THE METHODISTS.**

IN giving a full and explicit statement of the Doctrines of the Methodists, it will be peculiarly proper to insert some abstracts of Mr. Wesley's writings upon the several subjects. His first four volumes of Sermons, united with his Notes on the New Testament, may be properly termed the *test* of the doctrines among them. In most of the deeds of trust belonging to our chapels, it is inserted, that no preacher, though appointed by the conference, shall be suffered to preach there, who preaches any other doctrines than those contained in the Sermons and Notes; but there are other books, which were published by Mr. Wesley, and have been continued to be printed and sold ever since his death, under the authority and direction of the conference, which are of equal authority in ascertaining the genuine doctrines of Methodism; the only objection is, that they are not mentioned in the deeds of trust. With something from these authorized publications, I purpose to conclude each article in the statement of doctrines, at least such as particularly distinguish the Methodists from Christians of other denominations; the doctrines of Methodism, differ little, if at all, from those contained in the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of the Church of England.

What I have inserted from Mr. Wesley's writings, is as nearly in his own words as was practicable in making the extracts: and whatever little variation there may be from his language, there is no variation of his *ideas*. His sentiments are, without addition or diminution, faith-

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fully exhibited to the reader. And these opinions are (perhaps with as little want of uniformity as ever existed among any denomination of Christians, at least of a body so numerous,) the sentiments of the preachers and people composing the Methodist connexion.

It may not be improper to observe, that the design of this work is not so much to *defend* Methodism, as to *explain* it. And, indeed, the author thinks a true portraiture of the History, Doctrines, and Discipline of the Methodists, their *best* and *only necessary* defence.

SECT. I.—*On God, the Object of Worship.*

The Methodists believe, concerning God and his attributes, that there is *one* God; that his existence is from everlasting to everlasting: that God is a Spirit; that he is present in every place; knows every thing: is almighty in power; true and faithful; pure and holy; perfectly just; and yet unspeakably merciful. They believe further, that in the Unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternal existence, the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost*.

An extract from Mr. Wesley's sermon, "On the Trinity," will illustrate the above doctrine. The text is, I John v. 7. *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

He observes, that opinion, yea, even right opinion, is not religion. Persons may be quite right in their opinions, and yet have no religion at all. Can any one doubt this, while there are Romanists in the world? Many of them have been truly religious in former times, such as Gregory Lopez, Thomas-a-Kempis, and the Marquis de Renty; and many of them, at this day, are real inward Christians. And yet what a heap of erroneous opinions

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do they hold, delivered by tradition from their fathers? Nay, who can doubt it, while there are asserters of absolute predestination? Many of these in the last century were burning and shining lights, and many of them are now real Christians, loving God and all mankind. And yet, what absurdity equal to that, that one part of mankind shall be saved, do what they will, and the rest damned do what they can! Hence we infer, there are many mistakes which may consist with true religion. But there are some truths more important than others; some of very deep importance, as having a close connection with vital religion. And doubtless we may rank among these, that contained in the words of the text. I do not mean, that it is of importance to believe this or that *explication* of these words. I know not that any well judging man would attempt to explain them at all. One of the best tracts which Dean Swift ever wrote, was his sermon upon the Trinity. In this he shews, that all who have endeavoured to explain it at all, have utterly lost their way: have above all other persons hurt the cause which they intended to promote; have only, as Job speaks, *darkened counsel, by words without knowledge*. I insist upon no explication at all; no, not even the best I ever saw; I mean that which is given us in the creed commonly ascribed to Athanasius. I am far from saying, he who does not assent to this, 'shall, without doubt, perish everlastingly.' I dare not insist upon any one using the word *Trinity* or *Person*. I use them myself without scruple, because I know of none better. But if any man has any scruple concerning them, who shall constrain him to use them? I would insist only on the words unexplained, just as they lie in the text, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

Some have doubted whether the text was written by

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the apostle, or inserted in later ages, particularly Bengelius. But his doubts were removed by three considerations. 1. Though it is wanting in many copies, yet it is found in many more, and those copies of the greatest authority. 2. It is cited by a whole train of ancient writers, from the time of St. John, to that of Constantine. This argument is conclusive: for they could not have cited it, had it not then been in the sacred canon. 3. We can easily account for its being wanting after that time, in many copies, when we remember, that Constantine's successor was a zealous Arian, who used every means to promote his bad cause, and to spread Arianism through the empire: in particular, erasing this text out of as many copies as fell into his hands. And he so far prevailed, that the age in which he lived, is commonly called, The Arian Age: there being only one eminent man, who opposed him at the peril of his life. So that it was a proverb, 'Athanasius against the world.'

But it is objected, "Whatever becomes of the text, we cannot believe what we cannot comprehend. When, therefore, you require us to believe mysteries, we pray you to have us excused." Here is a two-fold mistake. We do not require you to believe any mystery in this, as you suppose. But you do already believe many things which you cannot comprehend. You believe there is a *sun* over your head. But you cannot comprehend *how* he moves, or *how* he rests; or by what power he is upheld in the fluid ether. The *fact* you cannot deny; but you cannot *account* for it so as to satisfy any rational inquirer. The *manner* you cannot comprehend.

You believe there is such a thing as *light*, whether flowing from the sun, or any other luminous body. But you cannot comprehend either its nature, or the manner in which it flows. How does it move from Jupiter to the earth in eight minutes, two hundred thousand

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miles in a moment? How do the rays of a candle brought into a room, instantly disperse into every corner? Again, here are three candles, yet there is but one light. Explain this, and I will explain the Three-One-God.

You believe there is such a thing as *air*. It both covers you as a garment, and 'wide interfused embraces round this florid earth.' But can you comprehend how? Can you give me a satisfactory account of its nature, or of its properties? By no means.

You believe there is such a thing as *earth*. You stand upon it. It supports you. But what supports the earth? We know it is God that *spreadeth out the north over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing*. But who can account for this? I know what is said concerning the powers of projection and attraction. But matter of fact sweeps away the hypothesis. Connect the force of projection and attraction how you can, they will never produce a circular motion. The moment the projected steel comes within the attraction of the magnet, it does not form a curve, but drops down.

You believe you have a *soul*, connected with your body. But can you tell how? Can you comprehend what are the ties that unite the heavenly flame with the earthly clod? You know it *is so*; but *how*, none can tell.

You believe you have a *body*, together with your soul, and that each is dependent on the other. Only run a thorn into your hand: immediately pain is felt in your soul. And if shame be felt in your soul, a blush instantly overspreads your cheek. If the soul feels fear, or violent anger, the body trembles. At the command of your soul, your hand is lifted up. But who can ac-

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count for this act of the mind and the outward actions? Nay, who can account for *muscular motion* at all?

The plain inference is this: those who will not believe any thing but what they can comprehend, must not believe there is a *sun*, that there is either *light* or *air*, that there is any *earth*, though they stand upon it, or that they have either *soul* or *body*.

You are not required to believe in any mystery in the matter. It is only the *fact* you are required to believe; and the mystery does not lie in the *fact* but in the *manner*. God said, 'Let there be light, and there was light.' I believe this as to *fact*; but as to the *manner* of it, I believe nothing, and know nothing. *The word was made flesh*. I believe this *fact* also. But as to the *manner* of his being flesh, wherein alone the mystery lies, I know nothing about it, and I believe nothing about it. It is no more the object of my faith, than it is the object of my understanding. To apply this to the case before us. *There are three that bear record in heaven, and these three are one*. I believe this *fact* also, (if I may use the expression) that God is Three and One. But the *manner how*, I do not comprehend: I do not believe it. It is in the *manner* that the mystery lies: and let it lie there; for I have nothing to do with it. It is no object of my faith; I believe just as much as God has revealed, and no more. The *manner* he has not revealed, and therefore I have nothing to do with it. But would it not be absurd in me to deny the *fact*, because I do not understand the *manner*? That is to reject what God *has revealed*, because I do not comprehend *what he has not revealed*. This is a point much to be observed. There are many things which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.' Part of these God hath 'revealed to us by his Spirit:' that is unveiled or uncovered. This part he requires us to

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believe. But part of these things he has not revealed: and that part we need not, and indeed cannot believe.

Is it right to reject what is revealed, because we cannot understand what is not revealed? What God has been pleased to reveal upon this subject, is a truth of the utmost importance. It is the centre and root of all genuine Christianity. Unless they admit of the divinity of the Son of God, how can they *honour the Son even as they honour the Father*? And it is written, *Let all the angels of God worship him.*

The knowledge of the Three-One-God, is interwoven with all true Christian faith, and with all vital religion. I know not how any one can be a Christian believer, till he *hath* (as St. John speaks) *the witness in himself: till the Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit, that he is a child of God*: that is, in effect, till God the Holy Ghost witnesses, that God the Father has accepted him, through the merits of God the Son: and having this witness, he honours the Son, and the blessed Spirit, *even as he honours the Father.*

The Methodists believe, that Jesus Christ is strictly and properly God, and at the same time man; and that he was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, lived a perfectly holy life, proved himself to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah, by many signs and wonders, was crucified under the government of Pontius Pilate, died, and by his sufferings and death atoned for the sins of the world; that he rose again from the dead, the third day, ascended into heaven, now sits at the right hand of the Father, having all power in the kingdoms of providence and of grace, put into his hands; that he intercedes for men, and especially for true Christians; that he will come again with power and great glory, to judge the world in righteousness, and assign to all their eternal state and condition. And they

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further believe, that Jesus Christ received of the Father, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and shed him forth abundantly on his immediate followers, both in his miraculous and regenerating influences; that he still gives this holy Spirit to them that ask him, to illuminate, comfort, strengthen, and sanctify them; and that if we have not the Spirit of Christ we are not Christians.

An analysis of Dr. Coke's sermon "On the Godhead of Christ," will give the reader an idea of the opinion of the Methodists on that important subject. The text is John i. 1. *The Word was God.* After an appropriate and interesting exordium, the Doctor proceeds to state,

I. The several instances that represent our Lord as a most extraordinary personage: and first, the many signs and presages that he *should become* such. The salutation of his virgin Mother, the interview between Mary and Elisabeth, the star that appeared to the wise men in the east, the appearance of the angel to the shepherds at Bethlehem, the anthem there sung to the heavenly choir, and the message delivered to Joseph in a dream, directing him to take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt. The expectations raised by these signs, were not disappointed, when he entered on his most important sphere of action. This was manifested by his disputation with the doctors in the temple; the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him when baptized of John in Jordan, accompanied with the voice from heaven, in conjunction with the testimony of the Baptist; his fasting, combat with, and victory over the devil in the wilderness; his speaking as never man spake; his miracles, by which he turned water into wine, drove the multitude out of the temple, healed the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, fed multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, while more provision was found after they were filled than when they began to eat; raised from the

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dead Jairus's daughter, the widow's son of Nain, and more especially his beloved friend Lazarus. This same proof was given, by his restoring sight to the blind, yea, such as were born blind, by the withering of the fig-tree after he had cursed it, by the obedience which the winds and seas yielded to his commands, his walking on the sea, and many more amazing and beneficent miracles. Other proofs of the dignity and importance of his person and mission, may be gathered from his transfiguration in the mount; the testimony of the very devils, that he was the Holy One of God, the miracles which his apostles wrought in and by his name, and the various wonders which attended his sufferings and death.

II. Let us proceed to prove by the scripture account, that Christ is God in the highest and fullest sense of the word. We may argue *indirectly*, by drawing plain consequences. He is said to be 'in the form of God, and equal with him,' Phil. ii. 6. To have 'all the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him bodily,' Col. ii. 9. To be 'the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person,' Heb. i. 3. To be more particular, let us consider our Saviour, 1. In respect to the *attributes* of God. (1.) His *eternity*. He is 'from everlasting to everlasting,' Rev. i. 8. 11. 17.: xxii. 13. He is 'Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, who was, and is, and is to come.' (2.) He is *omnipotent*, Rev. i. 8. Phil. iii. 21. 'The Almighty,' and 'able to subdue *all things* unto himself.' (3.) He is *omniscient*, John ii. 24, 25.: xxi. 17.: xvi. 30. He 'knew all men, what was in man,' and 'all things.' (4.) He is *omnipresent*, Matt. xviii. 20.: xxviii. 20. 'In the midst of two or three, wherever gathered together, and with his disciples always, even unto the end of the world.' He is (5.) *immutable*. Heb. xiii. 8.: i. 10. 12. 'The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' and 'his years shall not fail.'

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2. All the *honours* of the Most High are paid to the name of Christ, and that whether internal or external. And (1.) all internal honours. He is the proper object of *faith*, John iii. 36. : xiv. 1. '*Believe in me.*' 'He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life.' He is the object of *hope*, 1 Tim. i. 1. Of *love*, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. (2.) Outward acts of worship are paid to him, Luke xxiv. 52. Acts vii. 39. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. The apostles, and others, '*worshipped him.*' Stephen said, '*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,*' and Paul '*besought the Lord (Jesus) thrice.*' '*Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord,*' Phil. ii. 10. The angels are commanded to worship him, Heb. i. 6.

3. All the *works*, of the Most High are ascribed to him. And, (1.) the work of *creation*, John i. 3. Col. i. 14—17. Heb. i. 8. 10. '*All things were made by him; he laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands.*' (2.) The *preservation* of all things is ascribed to him, Col. i. 17. Heb. i. 3. '*By him all things consist,*' and he '*upholds all things.*' (3.) Forgiveness of sins is ascribed to him, Matt. ix. 6. Luke vii. 4. 8. '*The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins;*' '*Thy sins are forgiven thee.*' (4.) All his miracles were wrought *in his own name*, or by his own immediate power. It was so, when he healed the Centurion's servant, Peter's wife's mother, the son of the nobleman of Capernaum, the man at Bethesda's pool, the man afflicted with the palsy, the woman who had been long afflicted with the issue of blood, the man with the wither'd hand, and the daughter of the woman of Canaan; and the case was the same, when he raised the three different persons from the dead. See John v. 19. '*What things soever he (the Father) doth, these also doth the Son likewise.*' Lastly, the works of grace and regeneration are attributed to him, Rom. i. 7. '*Grace be to*

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you, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.' This is Paul's usual salutation in the beginning of his epistles. 'Without me ye can do nothing,' John xv. 5. And the Spirit, by whose operations every good is wrought in the soul of man, is frequently styled, *the Spirit of Christ*.

The divinity of Christ may be proved *directly*, by passages of scripture, in which he is called *God*, or *Jehovah*, or *Lord of Hosts*; as well as from the titles adjoined to the word God, when applied to our Saviour, so as to restrain the word to its most proper and highest signification, and to demonstrate him to be God by *nature*, and not by *office* only. Read Isa. vi. 1, 2, 3. 'I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, and his train filled the temple,' &c. 'And they cried, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts,' &c. And again verse 5, the prophet says. 'Mine eyes have seen the king, *the Lord of Hosts*.' It is evident from John xii. 41. that these words were spoken of our Lord. 'These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.'

We must not overlook the remarkable declaration of our Lord, John viii. 58. Before *Abraham* was, I AM: ascribing to himself the incommunicable name of the self-existent God. The text says '*The Word was God*.' Thomas said, 'My Lord and my God,' John xx. 28. 'Feed the church of God,' said Paul, 'which he hath purchased with *his own blood*,' Acts xx. 28. 'Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever,' Rom. ix. 5. '*God* manifested in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16. 'Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because *he* laid down his life for us,' 1 John, iii. 16. Read also Heb. i. 8. and Psa. xlv. Such titles are adjoined to the word *God*, when applied to our Saviour, as demonstrate him to be God by *nature*, and not by *office* only. '*The true God*,' 1 John, v. 20, '*The great God*,' Tit. iii. 13. '*The mighty God*,' Isa. ix. 6.

The creation—the fall of Man.

‘*The Lord of glory.*’ 1 Cor. ii. 8. ‘*The King of kings, and Lord of lords,*’ Rev xvii. 14. ‘*The everlasting Father,*’ Isa. ix. 6.

We may well confess, with John, in the words of the text, ‘**THE WORD WAS GOD.**’

SECT. II.—*The Creation.*

The Methodists believe, that God created the world, visible and invisible, together with angels, men, and every thing that is, and hath life. They believe, that God made man, with *a design* that he should know, love, and be happy with God for ever; that he made man’s body out of the dust of the ground, and his soul out of nothing, after his own image in knowledge and true holiness, with power sufficient to have stood, and yet possessed with such liberty of choice that he might fall; that man was placed in the garden of Paradise, and was commanded not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

SECT. III.—*The Fall of Man.*

But the Methodists believe, that man transgressed the commandment of God, and brought on himself thereby, sin and guilt, pain and death; and that he brought the same evils upon all his posterity: that all men are born in sin, and subject to pain and death. They believe, that man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually; being proud, self-willed, loving the world with an idolatrous affection, and at enmity with God, not subject to the law of God, nor capable of being so, till regenerated by grace.

In a small treatise on “*Original Sin*,” extracted from

The fall of Man.

a late author," and published by Mr. Wesley, are the following propositions. The same sentiment, more largely explained, may be found in his "Answer to Dr. Taylor."

"*God made man upright.*" By man we are to understand our first parents, Adam and Eve, the root of all mankind. Man was made upright, that is, straight with the will of God, and without any irregularity in his soul. God made him: and in the act of *making* him, made him *righteous*. With the same breath, he breathed into him a *living* and a *righteous* soul. This righteousness implied a conformity of all the powers of the soul to the law of God. This conformity implied three things. First, his understanding was a lamp of light. He was made in the image of God, in *knowledge* as well as holiness. He had the knowledge of God's will, and also of the works of God. This was proved, in his giving such names to the various creatures, as expressed their nature. Secondly, his will lay straight with the will of God. In his will, was no corruption, or inclination to evil. It was disposed by its original make, to follow the Creator's will, as the shadow does the body. Thirdly, his affections were regular and holy. All his passions, yea, all his sensitive motions and inclinations, were subordinate to his reason and will, while they lay straight with the will of God. And he had power answerable to his will, to fulfil the whole will of God.

Man's original righteousness, was universal and natural, yet capable of change. 1. It was universal, as the *subject* of it, the *whole man*, and the *object* of it, the *whole law*. 2. It was *natural* to him. This was necessary to the perfection of man. 3. It was mutable. It *might* be lost, as appears from the sad event of its being lost. See Gen. i. 27. Col. iii. 10. Eph. iv. 24. Gen. i. 31. Psa. xxv. 8. And as man was made holy, so he

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was happy. He enjoyed peace, was loved by God, and had full communion with him. He was also universal lord over the world, having dominion over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, and every thing that moved on the earth. He had external tranquillity; a body beautiful, not capable of being injured by the air, nor liable to diseases, nor subject to toil and weariness. He was made immortal. He would never have died if he had not sinned. Death was threatened only in case of sin, and came into the world by sin.

But our nature is now entirely corrupted. Where *was* no evil, is *now* no good. This may be proved, 1. By *God's word*. Compare Gen. v. ver. 1, with ver. 5.: and see Job xiv. 4. John iii. 6. Col. ii. 11. 2. *Experience* proves it. What a flood of miseries overflow the world! Some are oppressed with poverty; some are in pain or sickness; some are lamenting their losses; and none without some cross: no man's condition is so soft, but there is some thorn of uneasiness; till death comes, sooner or later, and sweeps all off the earth. 3. The corruption of nature is discovered early in children. What pride, vanity, self-will, and perverseness! 4. Behold the bitter fruits of corrupt nature! *The wickedness of man is great in the earth*. The world is filled with all manner of filthiness, unrighteousness, and impiety. 5. Since Cain shed Abel's blood, the world has been a slaughter-house, and on the earth, and in the seas, the greater creatures have constantly been devouring the lesser. 6. Corruption is so strong in man, that *human* laws are necessary, fenced with terrors and severities. 7. Consider the *remains* of corruption in believers in Christ Jesus, who imperfectly fear, worship, love, and serve God.

Let us add, sin rages the more in man, the more God

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seeks to restrain it; men care more for the body than the soul: are generally discontented with the lot assigned them by a good and wise Providence; sinners seek after secrecy; are unwilling to acknowledge their sins; they endeavour to extenuate their guilt, and to transfer it to others. To be a little more particular in our description of human nature. Man, in his natural state, is altogether corrupt, through all the faculties of his soul. 1. The understanding is covered with darkness in spiritual things. The unrenewed part of mankind are rambling through the world, like blind men, who will neither take a guide, nor can guide themselves, and therefore fall over the precipice into destruction. And the dark mind is averse to spiritual light. 2. The will is equally degenerated. It is averse to good: it rebels against light; and is prone to evil. 3. The affections are disordered, earthly, sensual, and devilish. 4. The conscience is blind, sleepy, and defiled with guilt.

In the first four volumes of Mr. Wesley's Discourses, he has a sermon on "Original Sin," Gen. vi. 5. In this, he undertakes to shew,

I. What men were before the deluge. *The wickedness of man was great: not barely a few, or the greater part, but of man in general, of men universally. The word includes the whole human race. All the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart, of his soul, were only evil, and that continually. There was no good mingled with evil, nor light with darkness. And this was continually: every year, day, hour, and moment.*

II. But are men the same now? I answer, 1. The scripture gives us no reason to think otherwise of man. Above a thousand years after the flood, God said by David, *They are all gone out of the way, of truth and holiness, there is none righteous, no not one.* And all the prophets, in their several generations, bore wit-

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ness to this humbling truth. 2. This account is confirmed by daily experience. *Every man living, is altogether vanity, that is, folly, ignorance, sin, and wickedness.* 3. Men are *without God*, or rather atheists in the world. 4. Were men brought up without any religious instructions, they would not (unless grace prevented) have any religion at all. 5. As we have no knowledge, so we have no love, or fear of God. We are proud, self-willed, lovers of the world, seeking happiness in the creature, in the pleasures of sense; and sensual appetites lead us captive. We are enslaved by *the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, and the pride of life.*

III. We may infer, 1. The difference between heathenism and Christianity. *They* believe that man was *evil* in some things; but that in some, the good overbalanced the evil. 2. The nature of the religion of Jesus Christ. It is God's method of healing a soul which is thus diseased.

SECT. IV.—*Salvation only through Christ.*

The Methodists believe, that man cannot be restored from his fall, and enjoy pardon, adoption, holiness, and heaven, but in and through Jesus Christ; that through his living, suffering, dying, rising again, ascending into heaven, and there ever living to make intercession for us, salvation is offered to, and attainable by all. They believe that he gave himself a ransom for all; that gospel salvation is sincerely offered to all; that those who are not saved, must eternally blame themselves only; and yet they believe, that we are not saved by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his own free mercy, by the washing of regeneration and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and that salvation now, as well as heaven hereafter, is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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In his sermon, entitled, "The Lord our Righteousness," Jeremiah xxiii. 6. he remarks, 'This is a truth which enters deep into the nature of Christianity: the christian church stands or falls with it. It is certainly the pillar and ground of that faith, of which alone cometh salvation: of that catholic or universal faith, which is found in all the children of God, and which 'unless a man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.' I will endeavour to shew, says he,

"I. What is the righteousness of Christ. It is either his divine or his human righteousness. 1. His divine righteousness belongs to his divine nature, as he is *He that existeth, over all, God, blessed for ever: the Supreme, the Eternal: 'equal with the Father, as touching his godhead, though inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood.'* Now this is his eternal, essential, immutable holiness; his infinite justice, mercy, and truth: in all which *he and the Father are one.* But I do not apprehend that the divine righteousness of Christ is immediately concerned in the present question. Few, if any, contend for the *imputation* of *this* righteousness. Whoever believes the doctrine of imputation, understands it chiefly, if not solely, of his human righteousness. 2. The *human righteousness* of Christ, belongs to him in his human nature: as he is *the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* This is either *internal* or *external.* His internal righteousness is the image of God stamped on every power and faculty of his soul. It is a transcript of his divine purity, justice, mercy, and love. It includes love, reverence, and resignation to his Father; humility, meekness, gentleness; love to lost mankind, and every other holy and heavenly temper: and all these in the highest degree, without any defect, or mixture of unholiness. It was the least part of his external

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righteousness, that he did nothing amiss, knowing no sin, nor having guile found in his mouth. This was only *negative* righteousness. But even his outward righteousness was *positive* too. *He did all things well.* In every word and work, in the whole course of his life, he did *the will of him that sent him.* 3. His obedience implied his sufferings also, when *he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.* But,

“II. *When is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and in what sense is it imputed?* 1. To *all believers*, the righteousness of Christ is imputed; to all unbelievers it is not. And it is imputed *when* a man believes, as soon as he believes; for faith and the righteousness of Christ are inseparable. But, 2. In *what sense* is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us? In this sense: all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of any thing in them, or any thing that ever was, that is, or can be done by them; but wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered for them. See Tit. iii. 5. *We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* And this is not only the means of obtaining the favour of God, but of our *continuing* therein. “And this is the doctrine,” adds Mr. Wesley, “which I have constantly believed and taught, which I published in 1738, and ten or twelve times since.” That is, he had *published* the doctrine thus *in print*; for he was *constantly* publishing it in *preaching*. The hymns published, and republished so many times, speak fully to the same purpose: Take one for all.

“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress:
'Midst flaming worlds in these array'd,
With joy shall I lift up my head,” &c.

See large Hymn-book, page 186, Hymn 183. The reader has here a fair epitome of this interesting discourse.

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SECT. V.—*The Plan of Salvation.*

The Methodists believe, that although salvation is attainable by all, yet that none will be saved, but those who comply with the terms of salvation, as expressed in the holy scriptures. And they believe, that these terms are, 1. Repentance towards God. Sinful and guilty man is commanded to repent, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. This repentance, they believe, implies, (1.) A conviction that we have done the things we ought not to have done, and left undone those things which we ought to have done; that all we like sheep have gone astray, and have turned every one to his own way; that we are guilty before God, and, if we die in this state must be turned into hell. (2.) They believe, that repentance includes contrition for sin. To true penitents, the remembrance of their sins will be grievous, and the burthen intolerable. They believe, (3.) That true repentance will produce confession of sin. Of this they find many instances in the bible. (4.) Above all, they believe, that true repentance implies reformation, and that all who repent will bring forth fruits meet for repentance, by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well; that a penitent is humbled, hates his sins, and turns from them, purposing to walk in the way of God's commandments. They believe, 2. That in order to be saved, it is absolutely necessary that we should have faith: and faith includes, (1.) A conviction of those unseen things which God has told us in the Bible: that a believer receives all those important truths contained in 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' called in holy scripture, 'the form of sound words,' 'the mystery of faith,' and, 'the faith of the gospel:' that to true believers, the gospel has 'come, not in word only, but also in power,'

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influencing the heart and life, 'and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance :' that a true believer is not only persuaded of the *truth* and *importance* of the gospel, but trembles at its *threatenings*, embraces its *promises*, and yields obedience to its *commands*. (2.) They believe, the principal act of the faith that brings salvation is, to *receive* Jesus Christ, in all his mediatorial offices, trusting in him, and the promises of God through him, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, according to the new covenant.

One of the first sermons which Mr. Wesley published, he entitled, "Salvation by Faith." Eph. ii. 8. Here he inquires,

I. What faith it is through which we are saved. 1. It is not barely the faith of a heathen. God requires a heathen to believe, *That God is*, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. A Greek or Roman heathen was without excuse, if he did not believe the being and attributes of God, a future state of rewards and punishments, and the obligatory nature of moral virtue. 2. It is not the faith of a devil, though that goes much farther than the faith of a heathen. No doubt, the devil believes not only the being and attributes of God, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; and also the truth and divinity of the holy Scriptures, Luke iv. 34. James ii. 19. Acts xvi. 16—18. 3. The faith whereby we are saved, is not barely that which the apostles themselves had while Jesus was yet upon earth, though they so believed on him as to forsake all and follow him; and had power to work many miracles. 4. The faith whereby we are saved, is, (1.) A faith in Christ: Christ, and God through Christ, are the proper objects of it. This differs from the faith of a heathen: he believes nothing about Christ. (2.) It is distinguished from the faith of a devil, as it is not barely

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speculative, but implies a disposition of the heart. *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy HEART, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, Acts viii. 37. 5.* This faith differs from that which the apostles had while Christ was upon earth, as it acknowledges the *necessity* and *merit* of his death and the power of his resurrection. It acknowledges his death as the only means of redeeming man from death eternal; and his resurrection as the restoration of us all to life and immortality: inasmuch as *he was delivered for our sins, and raised again for our justification.* It is a recumbency upon him as *given for us, and living in us*; and in consequence hereof, a closing with him, and cleaving to him, as our *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*

II. The salvation which is through this faith, is a present salvation: and that from original and actual sin; past and present sin; from its guilt and power. (1.) From the guilt of past sin. 'We are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.' (2.) We are saved from the *fear that hath torment.* Such believers have peace with God; the witness of the Spirit; they love God; and rejoice in hope of his glory. (3.) They are saved from the *power* of sin. 'We know that whatsoever is born of God sinneth not: but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not, 1 John iv. 18. 1 John iii. 5. Such a believer sins not, by any *habitual* or *reigning* sin; by any *wilful* sin; by sinful desires; nor by sins of infirmity, whether in act, word or thought. His infirmities have concurrence of his will; and without this they are not properly sins.

III. Some objections answered. Some object, 1. That preaching salvation by faith, is to preach against holiness

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and good works. This would be true, if we spoke of a faith that was separate from these. But on the contrary, we speak of a faith which is necessarily productive of all holiness and good works. We do not make void the law through faith, but we rather establish it; continually enforcing, that all who have believed should be careful to maintain good works. 2. This doctrine does not lead men into pride, Rom. iii. 27. 3. It gives no just encouragement to sin, but the contrary. 4. It will not drive people to despair; nor is it an uncomfortable doctrine. 5. It ought to be preached as the *first* doctrine, and to be preached to *all*.

In Mr. Wesley's sermon on "The way to the Kingdom," Mark i. 15. he says, the words naturally lead us to consider,

"I. The nature of true religion, here termed, *The kingdom of God*. This kingdom is not meats and drinks, Rom. xiv. 17. It does not consist in ritual exercises, nor in any outward thing whatsoever. Not in forms or ceremonies. Nor in orthodoxy, or right opinions. What is it then? Why, (1.) *Righteousness*. The two grand branches of this are love to God and love to man, Mark xii. 30. This is the fulfilling of the law. (2.) *Peace*. It is a peace that banishes all doubt and painful uncertainty; the Spirit of God bearing witness with the spirit of a christian that he is a child of God. And it banishes all fear that hath torment; the fear of the wrath of God, the fear of hell, the devil, and in particular, the fear of death: for he that hath the peace of God, desires to be with Christ. (3.) *Joy in the Holy Ghost*. Joy wrought in the heart by the holy Spirit of God, He rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And *this kingdom of God is at hand*. It was then at hand, Christ being manifest in the flesh; and whereve

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the gospel is preached, this kingdom is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel.

“II. Repent, and believe the gospel. (1.) *Repent.* Know that corruption of thy heart whereby thou art very far gone from original righteousness: that there is no soundness in thy soul, but only wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores. Be duly sensible of the sinfulness of thy conduct. Know that the wages of sin is death, and that both bodily and eternal. The soul that sinneth shall die. And thou canst do nothing to appease the wrath of God. Add to this lively conviction of thy inward and outward sins, suitable affections: sorrow of heart, for despised mercies, remorse, fear of God’s wrath, earnest desire to flee from the wrath to come; cease to do evil and learn to do well. 2. *Believe the gospel.* *The gospel*, i. e. good tidings: and sometimes it signifies the whole revelation of God by Jesus Christ. Believe this. By faith thou attainest the promise. But true faith is not a bare assent to the truth of the bible, but a sure trust in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ. It is a confidence in a pardoning God. It is a divine evidence or conviction, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses: and, in particular, that the Son of God hath loved *me*, and given himself for *me*; and that I, even I, am now reconciled to God, by the blood of the cross.

“Dost thou thus believe? Then thou hast the peace of God. And thou art no longer afraid of hell, or death, or the devil; nor yet painfully afraid of the wrath of God: only thou hast a tender reverential fear of offending him. Dost thou thus believe? Then thou lovest God, and lovest thy brother also; and art filled with holy and heavenly dispositions. And whilst thou beholdest with open face, the glory of the Lord, his glorious love, and

glorious image, thou art changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."

Mr. Wesley in his sermon on "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Eph. ii. 8, inquires,

"I. What is salvation? And he answers, 1. It does not here so much signify future salvation, or going to heaven, as a *present* salvation. 'Ye are saved by faith.' And, he observes, the words may be rendered with equal propriety, ye *have* been saved. So that the salvation here spoken of might be extended to the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul, till it is consummated in glory. The salvation the apostle is here speaking of, consists of two parts, justification and sanctification. Justification is another word for pardon, the forgiveness of all our sins, and (what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God. The price of this, is the blood and righteousness of Christ, or all that he did and suffered for us. The immediate effects of justification, are, the peace of God, and a rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

"At the same time that we are justified, yea, that very moment, sanctification begins. In that instant we are *born again, born from above, born of the Spirit*. There is a *real* as well as *relative* change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us, producing love to all mankind, more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, ease, honour or money, together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper. From the time of our being *born again*, the gradual work of sanctification takes place. But

"II. What is that *faith* through which we are saved?

1. Faith in general is defined by the apostle, Heb. xi. 1. *An evidence, a divine evidence and conviction, (the word*

means both) *of things not seen*: not visible, not perceivable, either by sight, or by any other of the external senses. It implies both a supernatural *evidence* of God and the things of God, a kind of spiritual *light* exhibited to the soul, and a supernatural *sight* or perception thereof: accordingly the scripture speaks of God sometimes giving light, and sometimes a power of discerning. So St. Paul, ‘God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.’ And elsewhere he speaks of *the eyes of our understanding being opened*. By this two-fold operation of the Holy Ghost, having *the eyes* of our soul both *opened* and *enlightened*, we see the things which the natural *eye hath not seen, neither the ear heard*.

2. Taking the word in a more particular sense, faith is an evidence and conviction, not only that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*; but also that *Christ loved me, and gave himself for me*. It is by this faith, (whether we term it the *essence*, or rather a *property* thereof,) that we *receive Christ*, in all his offices as our prophet, priest, and king; or wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30. *He that believeth, with the true living faith, hath the witness in himself: The Spirit beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God. Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father*: giving him an assurance that he is so, and a child-like confidence in him. 3. It is by this faith we are saved, justified and sanctified. But,

“III. *How are we justified and sanctified?* And. 1. *How are we justified by faith?* I answer, faith is the condition: for none are justified but those who believe. And it is the *only* condition; for all who believe are justified from *all things*. In other words, no man is jus-

tified till he believes ; but every man who believes is justified. It is true, God commands men to repent, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance ; and these are both necessary, in some sense, to justification. Without these we cannot expect to be justified at all. But yet, they are not necessary in the *same sense* with faith. For, repentance and its fruits are only *remotely* necessary ; necessary in order to faith : whereas faith is *immediately* and *directly* necessary to justification. And they are not necessary in the *same degree*. For these fruits of repentance are only necessary *conditionally* ; if there be time and opportunity for them, otherwise a man may be justified without them, as the thief upon the cross. But it is impossible for a man to be justified without faith. It remains, that faith is the only condition, which is *immediately* and *proximately* necessary to justification.

2. We are *sanctified* by faith. Exactly as we are *justified* by faith, so are we also *sanctified* by faith. Faith is the condition, and the only condition of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification. None is sanctified but he that believes ; but every one who believes is sanctified.

“ There is a repentance consequent upon, as well as previous to justification. And it is incumbent upon all who are justified, to be zealous of good works. Otherwise a man cannot expect to be sanctified. He cannot *grow in grace*, in the image of God, in the mind which was in Christ Jesus. Nay, without this, he cannot retain the grace he has received, or continue in faith, or the favour of God. Yet neither repentance, nor good works, however numerous, will avail to sanctify the man ; for he cannot be sanctified till he believes.

“ The faith, whereby we are sanctified, saved from sin, and perfected in love, is a divine evidence and conviction. (1.) That God hath *promised* it in the holy scriptures. (2.) That he is able to fulfil those promises.

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(3.) That he is *willing* to do so : and also to do it *now*. To this must be added one thing more ; a divine evidence and conviction, that he *does* do it. This sanctification is wrought both *gradually* and *instantaneously*. God often destroys sin in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Look for it, therefore, every moment. And should your expectation be disappointed, you lose nothing ; you are only where you were. But you shall not be disappointed. There is an inseparable connexion between these three points ; expect it by *faith*, expect it *as you are*, and expect it *now*. To deny *one* of them is to deny them *all* : to allow one, is to allow them all."

I have been the more particular in exhibiting the ideas contained in the above sermon, as it was so much to the point, and shews so explicitly Mr. Wesley's views of the plan of salvation, and the general views of the Methodists. These extracts render it unnecessary for me to insert so much as otherwise I might have done, upon some other of the articles, seeing what is here said, applies to several of them. It must here be repeated that the task undertaken, requires an exhibition of the doctrines of Methodism *just as they are*, and this cannot be done in any way so well as by constantly appealing to Mr. Wesley's writings.

SECT. VI.—*Privileges of Believers.*

The Methodists believe, that all who *repent* and *believe*, are, (1.) Justified, and have peace with God ; that we are accounted righteous, *only through* the sacrifice and intercession of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But although faith, receiving and resting upon Christ, is the sole condition and instrument of justification ; yet this faith in the justified person, 'worketh by love,' and produces inward and outward holiness. They believe,

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(2.) That all persons who are thus justified, are adopted into the family of God, have a right to all the privileges of his children, and many come boldly to the throne of grace; receiving the spirit of adoption, they are enabled to cry, Abba, Father; and, as his children, are loved, pitied, chastened, protected, and provided for; they are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; and that continuing in this state they shall inherit all the promises, and obtain everlasting life. They believe also, (3.) That those who are thus justified and made children of God, are *assured* of this; and that this blessed assurance arises from ‘The Spirit of God bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God.’ They believe, that no person, under the gospel-dispensation, is excluded from this privilege, except through unbelief, lukewarmness, the love of the world, or some other sin. To the enjoyment of this most comfortable privilege, the Methodists believe there can be no exception, unless in some extraordinary cases, occasioned by extreme ignorance, the influence of bodily complaints, or the violence of temptation. But they believe, that every person possessed of this justification, adoption, and witness of the Spirit, hungers and thirsts after righteousness.

“The witness of the Spirit,” is a subject Mr. Wesley has largely considered, in a Sermon on Rom. viii. 16. ‘The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.’

“I. The witness, or testimony, of our own spirit. He desires all those who are for swallowing up the *testimony of the Spirit of God*, in the *rational testimony* of our own spirit, to observe, that in this text, the apostle is so far from speaking of the testimony of our own spirit *only*, that it may be questioned, whether he speaks of it at *all*: whether he does not speak *only* of the testimony of the

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Spirit of God. It does not appear, but that the original may be fairly understood thus: the apostle had just said in the preceding verse, 'Ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,' and immediately subjoins, what may be translated, 'The same Spirit beareth witness to our spirits, that we are the children of God.' The word denotes that he witnesses this *at the same time*, he enables us to cry Abba, Father. But I contend not, seeing there are so many texts, with the experience of all real Christians, which sufficiently evince that there is, in every believer, both the testimony of God's Spirit, and the testimony of his own, that he is a child of God. With regard to the testimony of a Christian's *own* spirit, the foundation of this is laid in the numerous texts of scripture, which describe the marks of the children of God, and that very plainly. And these are collected together, and placed in the strongest light, by many both ancient and modern writers. This may be still further aided, by the ministry of the word, meditation, and religious conversation. And every man using the *understanding* which God has given him, and which religion was designed to improve, by applying those scripture marks to himself, may know whether he is a child of God. For instance, 1 John ii. 3. 5. 29.—iii. 4.—iv. 13.—iii. 24.—iii. 19.—v. 18. Probably, from the beginning of the world, none of the children of God were ever farther advanced in the grace of God, and the knowledge of Christ, than the apostle John, and those to whom he wrote at that time. Yet they did not despise these marks of being God's children; but applied them to their own souls, for the confirmation of their faith. Yet all this testimony is no other than rational; *the witness of our own spirit*, our reason or understanding. It all resolves into this; those who have these marks, they are God's children: but we have

these marks; therefore we are his children. But, how does it appear that we have these marks: that we love God, and our neighbour, and that we keep God's commandments? The question does not mean, how does it appear to *others*, but to *ourselves*. As easily as you can know, whether you are alive, in pain, or in ease, may you know whether you are saved from proud wrath, and have the ease of a meek and quiet spirit; whether you love your neighbour as yourselves; whether you are kindly affectioned, gentle and long-suffering; whether you outwardly keep God's commandments, by living godly, righteous, and sober lives. This is properly the *testimony of our own spirit*. It is a consciousness of our having received, in and by the spirit of adoption, the tempers mentioned in the word of God, as belonging to his adopted children.

“ But what is the testimony of God's Spirit which is super-added to, and conjoined with this? how does he bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God? It is hard to find words in the language of men, to explain *the deep things of God*. But, perhaps, one might say, the testimony of the Spirit, is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God: that Jesus hath loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*: that all *my* sins are blotted out, and *I*, even *I*, am reconciled to God.

“ This *testimony of the Spirit of God*, must, in the very nature of things, go before the testimony of our own spirit. We must be holy in heart and life, before we can be conscious that we are so. But we must love God before we can be holy at all; this being the root of all holiness. Now we cannot love God, till we know he loves us. And we cannot know his pardoning love to us, till his Spirit witness it to our spirit. Since, therefore, this testimony of his Spirit must precede the love of God and all

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holiness, of consequence, it must precede our inward consciousness thereof, or the testimony of our own spirit concerning them. We may explain this matter a little farther.

“ He that loves God, and delights and rejoices in him, with an humble joy, a holy delight, and an obedient love, is a child of God ; but I thus love, delight, and rejoice in God : therefore I am a child of God : then a Christian cannot doubt of his being a child of God, of the former proposition, he has as full assurance, as he has that the scriptures are of God ; and of his thus loving God, he has an inward proof which is nothing short of self-evident.

“ The *manner* how the divine testimony is manifested to the heart, I do not take upon me to explain ; see John iii. 8. But we know the *fact*, namely, that the Spirit of God gives a believer such a testimony of his adoption, that while it is present to the soul, he can no more doubt the reality of his sonship, than he can doubt of the shining of the sun, while he stands in the full blaze of heaven. But,

“ II. How may this joint testimony of God’s Spirit, and of our own spirit, be clearly distinguished, from presumption of mind, and the delusions of satan ? 1. To distinguish it from the presumption of a natural mind, (1.) The holy scriptures abound with marks, distinguishing the one from the other. They describe repentance, as constantly going before this witness of pardon, Matt. iii. 2. Mark i. 15. Acts ii. 38. : iii. 19. Again, (2.) The scriptures describe the being born of God, which must precede the witness that we are his children, as a change no less than from darkness to light, as well as from the power of satan unto God, Acts xxvi. 18. Col. i. 12. Eph. ii. 1—6. And, (3.) The scriptures describe the joy accompanying the witness of the Spirit, as tending to

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promote humility. In the presumptuous deceived man' it is the contrary. Instead of being humble, meek, gentle, teachable, swift to hear, and *slow to wrath*, he is haughty, assuming, slow to hear, and swift to speak, fiery, vehement, and eager in his conversation: yea, sometimes there is a fierceness in his air and manner of speaking, as well as his whole deportment, as if he were going to take the matter out of God's hands, and himself to *devour the adversaries*. (4.) The scriptures teach, *this is the love of God*, (the sure mark thereof) *that we keep his commandments*, see John xiv. 21. The genuine lover of God will do his will. But with the presumptuous pretender to the love of God, it is otherwise. He is not zealous, watchful over his tongue and heart, nor anxious to deny himself, or take up his cross. It follows from undeniable evidence, that he cannot have the true testimony of his own spirit. He cannot be conscious of having those marks which he has not, nor can the Spirit of God bear witness to a lie; or testify that he is a child of God, when he is manifestly a child of the devil.

“ III. What is *the witness of the Spirit*? The original word may be rendered, either *the witness*, or less ambiguously *the testimony*, or *the record*, 1 John v. 11. I do not mean to say, that the spirit of God testifies this by an outward voice; no nor always by an inward voice, although he may do this sometimes. Neither do I suppose, that he always applies some scripture to the heart, though he often may do this. But he so works upon the soul, by his immediate influence, and by a strong, though inexplicable operation, that the stormy wind and troubled waves subside, and there is a sweet calm; the heart resting in the arms of Jesus, and the sinner being clearly satisfied, that God is reconciled, and that all his *iniquities are forgiven, and his sins covered*. That there is a testimony of the Spirit is acknowledged by all parties.

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And it is not questioned whether there is an *indirect* witness or testimony, that we are the children of God. This is nearly if not exactly, the same with the testimony of a good conscience towards God. Nor do we assert, that there can be any real testimony of the Spirit, without the fruit of the Spirit. We assert on the contrary, that the fruit of the Spirit immediately springs from this testimony. But the point in question is, whether there be any *direct testimony* of the Spirit at all? whether there be any other testimony of the Spirit than that which arises from a consciousness of the fruit. I believe there is.

“IV. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.” It is manifest that there are two witnesses mentioned; who together testify the same thing, the Spirit of God, and our own spirit. But what is the witness of the Spirit? See the verse before the text, and Gal. iv. 6. And experience agrees with these scripture testimonies. It has been confirmed by a *cloud* of living and dying witnesses. It is confirmed by the experience of many at the present day. And it is sanctioned by this additional consideration, that all those who are awakened out of the sleep of sin, cannot be satisfied with any thing short of the direct witness of God’s Spirit that they are pardoned.”

I have been the larger in this out-line, because it is on a subject which peculiarly distinguishes the Methodists, and causes their doctrine to bear a striking resemblance to the Christian scriptures.

Respecting “The fruits of the Spirit,” Mr. Wesley’s sentiments may be learnt from a sermon he preached before the University of Oxford, August 24, 1744, on Acts iv. 31.—‘And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.’ He says, whether the *extraordinary* gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as the *speaking with other tongues*, the *gifts of healing*, of *miracles*, *prophecy*, and of the

discernment of spirits, were designed to remain in the church through all ages, and whether or no they will be restored at the nearer approach of the *restitution of all things*, are questions which it is not needful to decide. Even *then* they were divided with a sparing hand. Were *all workers of miracles*? Had *all the gifts of healing*? Did *all speak with tongues*? No: perhaps not one in a thousand. None but teachers in the church, and only some of them. It was therefore for a more excellent purpose than this, that *they were ALL filled with the Holy Ghost*. It was given them, (what none can deny to be essential to Christianity in all ages,) *the mind which was in Christ*, those *holy fruits of the Spirit*, which whosoever hath not is none of his: to fill them with *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness*: to endue them with *faith*, (perhaps it might be rendered *fidelity*) with meekness and temperance; to enable them to *crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts*, its passions and desires; and in consequence of that *inward change*, to fulfil all *outward righteousness to walk as Christ also walked in the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love*.

In another sermon by Mr. Wesley, on Rom. viii. 1. he inquires, Who are they that are in Christ Jesus? (1.) Those who believe in him; who have not on their own righteousness, but the righteousness which is by faith; who have redemption through the blood of Christ; who dwell in Christ, and have Christ to dwell in them; who are joined to the Lord in one spirit. Consequently, (2.) They *walk not after the flesh*. The flesh, in the usual language of St. Paul, signifies corrupt nature, Gal. v. 16, 19. (3.) *Who are in Christ, who abide in him, and have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts*. They abstain from the works of the flesh; from *adultery and fornication, from uncleanness and lascivious-*

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ness ; from *idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, and variance, from emulations, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings* : and from every design, word, and work, to which the corruption of nature leads. (4.) They now *walk after the Spirit*, both in their hearts and lives. They are taught by the Spirit to love God and their neighbour : and are led by him into every holy desire, and every holy and heavenly temper, till their hearts are purified from all unholiness. (5.) They who *walk after the Spirit*, are also led by him, into all holiness of conversation. Their speech is *always in grace, seasoned with salt*, with the love and fear of God. No corrupt communication comes out of their mouth, but only *that which is good* ; that which is to the use of *edifying*, which is meet to minister grace unto the hearers. They who indeed walk after the Spirit, (6.) Shew forth in the whole course of their lives, the genuine fruits of the Spirit, namely, *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance*, and whatsoever is lovely or of good report. They ‘adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.’

SECT. VII.—*The New-Birth, Sanctification, and Good Works.*

The Methodists believe, that the will of God is our sanctification, and that the design of Christ in our redemption is universal holiness. This section will include, *The new-birth, sanctification, and good works.*

I. The *new-birth* is that *internal* change of heart, which is produced in all those who are justified, and adopted into the family of God. Justification is a *relative*, but this is a *real* change ; justification is a change of *state*, but this is a change of *nature*. By justification, the guilty is forgiven ; but by regeneration, a *new heart* is

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given to him, and he becomes a *new creature* in Christ Jesus. This change extends to all the powers of the soul, illuminating the understanding, subjecting the will to the will of God, regulating the passions and sanctifying the affections. In short, the person who experiences this change is properly termed in scripture A NEW MAN, in consequence of his being 'Born again,' and '*walking in newness of life*.' And as God is the author of this important change, and effects it by his Holy Spirit, the regenerate are said in scripture to be *born of God*, and *born of the Spirit*. And inasmuch as the *Word of God*, and *faith* therein, are the instrumental causes of it, the regenerate are described as 'born again of incorruptible seed by the word of God,' as 'the children of God by *faith* in Christ Jesus.' Since the baptism of water, is at least, an emblem, and sometimes a mean of those divine influences whereby this change is produced, believers are said to be *born of water*, as well as *of the Spirit*, and to be *saved by the washing of regeneration*, as well as *by the renewing of the Holy Ghost*.

The *substance* of Mr. Wesley's sermon on "The New-Birth," very properly comes in here. The text is, John iii. 7. *Ye must be born again*. He makes three principal inquiries, i. e.

1. *Why* must we be born again? Why, because, 1. Though man was made in the image of God, he was not made immutable. This would have been inconsistent with that state of trial, in which God was pleased to place him. He was created with an ability to stand, and yet liable to fall. 2. From this high and holy state he fell. *He eat of the tree whereof the Lord had commanded, Thou shalt not eat thereof*. By this act of disobedience, he openly declared, he would no longer have God to rule over him, but that he would be governed by his own will. God had told him, *In the day thou*

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eatest of that fruit, *thou shalt surely die*. Accordingly, in that day, he died to God, losing the life of God, and was separated from him, in union with whom his spiritual life consisted. The body dies, when it is separated from the soul: the soul dies when it is separated from God. But this separation *Adam* sustained in the day, the hour he eat of the forbidden fruit. And of this he gave immediate proof. The love of God was gone, and servile fear succeeded it. He fled from the presence of the Lord. And so little knowledge of God did he retain, that he imagined he could hide himself from him who fills heaven and earth, among the trees of the garden. So had he lost both the knowledge and the love of God, without which the image of God could not subsist. Of this, therefore, he was deprived at the same time, and became unholy as well as unhappy. In the room of this, he sunk into pride and self-will, the very image of the devil, and into sensual appetites and desires, the image of the beasts that perish. The death God pronounced was not that of the body, for he did not *die that day*, but lived above nine hundred years after. It must be understood of spiritual death, the loss of the life and image of God. And *in Adam all died*, all the children of men, who were then in *Adam's* loins. The natural consequence is, that every one descended from him, comes into the world spiritually dead, dead to God, wholly *dead in sin*: void of all the life and image of God. Instead of the righteousness and true holiness, wherein *Adam* was created, every man born into the world, bears the image of the devil, in pride and self-will, the image of the beast, in sensual appetites and desires. This entire corruption of human nature, then, is the foundation of the new-birth.

2. What is the *nature* of the *new-birth*? We are not to expect any minute, philosophical account of the *manner* of this. This our Saviour told Nicodemus, when

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he said, ‘*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell, whence it cometh, neither whither it goeth.*’ Thou art absolutely assured, beyond all doubt, that it doth blow; but the precise manner how it begins and ends, rises and falls, no man can tell. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit.* Thou mayest be as absolutely assured of the fact, as of the blowing of the wind: but the precise manner how it is done, how the Holy Spirit works this in the soul, neither thou nor the wisest of the children of men are able to explain.

The expression, being *born again*, was not first used by our Lord. It was in common use among the Jews at that time. When an adult Heathen was convinced that the Jewish religion was of God, and wanted to join therein, it was the custom to baptize him first, before he was admitted to circumcision. And when he was baptized, he was said to be *born again*: by which they meant, that he, who was before a child of the devil, was now adopted into the family of God, and accounted one of his children. A man’s being spiritually *born again*, bears a near analogy to the natural birth. Before a child is born, it has eyes, but does not see: and ears, but it does not hear. It has a very imperfect use of any other sense. It has no knowledge of any thing, nor any understanding, To *that* existence we do not even give the name of life. It is only when a child is born that it begins to live. He then begins to see the light, and the various objects which surround him. His ears are opened, and he hears sounds. And all the other senses begin to be exercised upon their proper objects. And he breathes and lives in a manner, very different from what he did before. In like manner, before a man is born of God, he has eyes, but in a spiritual sense, does not see. Hence he has no knowlege of God, or of the things of God, either of spi-

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ritual or eternal things. But, when he is born of God, *the eyes of his understanding are opened.* He sees *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.* His ears are now opened, and he hears the voice of God. He is conscious of a peace that passeth understanding, and feels a joy unspeakable and full of glory. He feels the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him. And all his spiritual senses are exercised to discern spiritual good and evil. Now he may be properly said *to live*: God having quickened him by his Spirit, he is alive to God through Jesus Christ. He lives a life which is hid with Christ in God; God breathes grace into the soul, and the soul breathes prayer and praise to God; and he thus grows up, till he comes to *the fullness of the stature of Christ.* This is the *nature* of the new-birth.

3. To what *ends* is it necessary that we should be *born again*? It is necessary, 1. In order to holiness. Gospel-holiness is no less than the image of God stamped upon the heart. But this cannot be in the soul, till we are born again. The new-birth, therefore is necessary in order to holiness. But, 2. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*; without this no man shall see the face of God in glory. Of consequence, the new-birth is absolutely necessary, in order to obtain eternal salvation. 3. Except a man be *born again*, he cannot be happy even in this world. It is not possible that a man should be happy without being holy. All unholy tempers are uneasy tempers. Not only malice, hatred, envy, jealousy, and revenge, create a present hell in the breast, but even the softer passions, if not kept within due bounds, give a thousand times more pain than pleasure. All those general sources of sin, pride, self-will, and idolatry, are in the same proportion as they prevail, general sources of misery. Therefore as long as any of these reign

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in any soul, happiness has no place there. But they must reign, till our nature is changed by being born again. consequently, the new-birth is necessary in order to happiness in this world, as well as in the world to come.

4. I will subjoin a few natural inferences. 1. It follows, that baptism is not the new-birth: these are not, as many suppose, one and the same thing. Many speak as if they thought so, though I do not know that any denomination of Christians publicly avow it. 2. The new-birth does not always accompany baptism. A man may possibly be *born of water*, and yet not be *born of the Spirit*. *The tree is known by its fruits*. And in many instances, we know that adult persons have been baptized, and as they were the children of the devil before, so they continued so afterwards. 3. The new-birth is not the same as sanctification. It is a part of sanctification, but not the whole; it is the gate of it, and the entrance into it. Our inward and outward holiness then begins. And we must *grow up into him who is our head*. See the exactness of the analogy. A child is born in a moment, at least in a short time. But he gradually grows up in manhood. So a child of God is born in a short time, and grows to spiritual maturity. 4. *You must be born again*, though you have been baptized, or not baptized, otherwise you cannot be holy: though ever so harmless; though you do good, and attend public worship ever so constantly.

II. *Sanctification* as distinguished from the *new-birth*, is the progress and completion of that divine change which is begun in regeneration. It includes, not only a *separation from or deadness to*, the world and sin, and a *dedication and consecration* of the whole man, spirit, soul and body to God and his service, but is also a *conformity to his image*, and a *participation of the divine*

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nature. The *causes* and *means* of this sanctification, are the same with those by which the new-birth is produced: The ‘God of peace himself sanctify us,’ by giving us his holy and sanctifying spirit. His word of truth is one principal instrument in effecting this good work, and our faith and obedience is another. He *sanctifies us by his truth, purifies our hearts by faith, while we purify our souls by obeying the truth.* And as all this is through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, ‘our old man’ is said to be ‘crucified with him,’ we are ‘crucified to the world, and the world to us,’ and are ‘sanctified unto God by his blood,’ till we at last receive an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith that is in him.—Let me add, the Methodists believe, we may love God with all our hearts, and be delivered from the hands of all our spiritual enemies so completely that we may serve God without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of our life; yea, that we may rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.

It will be impossible to do justice to the subject of sanctification, without once more having recourse to Mr. Wesley’s sermons, especially as the Methodists stand particularly distinguished upon this point. One sermon of his, on Rom. ii. 29. is entitled, “The Circumcision of the Heart.” He inquires, wherein does this circumcision consist? 1. In general, it is an habitual, holy disposition of soul, which implies, being cleansed from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit; having the mind that was in Christ; and the image of God. 2. More particularly, it implies humility, faith, hope, and charity. Those who have this circumcision of heart, will love God and their brother also.

There is another sermon of his, on Phil. iii. 12. entitled, “Christian Perfection.” In this he endeavours to shew,

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1. In what sense Christians are *not* perfect. 1. They are *not perfect in knowledge*. They know many things; but there are many others which they do not know. They cannot fully comprehend, how God is one in three, and three in one; how Jesus took upon himself the form of a servant; they know not the times and the seasons when God will work his great works upon earth; much less when, 'the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.' In many respects, they know not the reasons of God's dispensations to many of the children of men. 2. No one is so perfect in this life as to be free from ignorance, or from sometimes making mistakes. The children of God do not mistake as to the things essential to salvation. But in matters unessential, they err frequently. They may mistake as to *facts* themselves, believing a thing to have been or not to have been, when the fact has been the reverse. Or, they may be mistaken as to *circumstances* belonging to *facts*. Nay, even respecting the Holy Scriptures, good men may, and often do, make mistakes, especially with regard to those parts which do not immediately relate to practice. 3. Christians are not so perfect as to be free from infirmities. I do not mean sins. But, not only such as are truly *bodily infirmities*, but all such infirmities, outward or inward, as are not of a moral nature: slowness of understanding, dullness or confusedness of apprehension, incoherency of thought, or irregular quickness or heaviness of imagination; or, a bad memory. Such are those, which partly flow from these, namely, slowness or impropriety of speech; and a thousand nameless defects, either in conversation or behaviour. 4. Nor can we expect to be wholly free from temptation, while in this life. It may be so for a time; but temptation will return. Even the Son of God himself was tempted; and that to the end of his life. But,

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2. In what *are* Christians perfect? But, observe, there are several stages in the Christian life; some are new-born babes, while others have attained to greater maturity. See 1 John ii. 12, &c. I speak at present, chiefly to fathers in Christ. 1. All real Christians are so perfect as not to live in outward sin. Rom. vi. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14, 18. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2. 1 John iii. 8, 18. 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.' And *this* privilege is common to *all* Christians. But, 2. Those who have overcome the wicked one, and are strong in the Lord, are free from *sinful thoughts*. But a thought concerning sin, and a sinful thought, are widely different. A man may think of a murder, which another has committed, and yet this is no sinful thought. 3. They are free from sinful tempers. 1 John iii. 3. Thus does God circumcise the hearts of his people, according to his promise. Deut. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, &c. *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved brethren, 'let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.'*

III. *Good Works*, are only such works as God has commanded in his holy word, and not such, as without any authority or countenance from the scripture, are devised by men out of blind zeal, or on a pretence of good intention. These good works done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith, insomuch that a true and lively faith may be as evidently known by them as a tree is discerned by its fruits. By these true Christians manifest their thankfulness, increase their confidence, edify their brethren, adorn their profession, stop the mouths of adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, 'created in Christ Jesus, unto these good works.' But, be it remembered, that works of man's devising, or works done *besides*, or *over* and *above* God's command-

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ments, which the papists call *Works of Supererogation*, cannot be taught without impiety and arrogancy. By these men seem to declare, that they not only do their duty, but that they do more than they are required to do. Whereas our Saviour positively says, 'When you have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.' Our good works, can neither profit God, nor make any satisfaction for our former sins. Nevertheless, the good works of true believers, being wrought through his Spirit, will be accepted through him, and find a gracious and abundant reward.

SECT. VIII.—*The Bible the only Rule of Faith and Practice.*

The Methodists believe, that in all the foregoing articles, they have drawn their opinions from the *word of God*, which they have declared to be "The only and sufficient rule, both of their faith and practice." They believe, that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not found therein, or cannot be proved thereby, ought not to be imposed upon any man as an article of faith, nor be thought necessary to salvation. By the *word of God*, or *holy scriptures*, the Methodists understand those divinely inspired canonical books of the Old and New Testament, the authority of which has been acknowledged by the church of God in all ages. The names of these books are, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the first and second Books of Samuel, the first and second Books of Kings, the first and second Books of Chronicles, the Book of Ezra, the Book of Nehemiah, the Book of Esther, the Book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, the Canticles, or Song of Solomon, the four greater, and the twelve lesser Pro-

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phets; and all the Books of the New Testament as commonly printed and received. They believe, that all, and each, of these several parts of the sacred volume, were written by the men, to whom, they are ascribed, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: but in both these Testaments, life everlasting is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man. For although the law, given by Moses, as touching ceremonies, is not binding upon Christians; yet all Christians ought to obey those commandments which are called moral.

SECT. IX.—*Sundry Controverted Doctrines.*

The Methodists believe, touching sundry points of doctrine, which have been much controverted in the church of Christ, as follows:—That is to say,

1. They do not admit the doctrines of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation, but believe them to be unscriptural; forasmuch as God has declared in his word, that he is ‘loving to every man,’ and ‘his tender mercies are over all his works:’ that ‘he willeth not the death of a sinner,’ is ‘not willing that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance;’ and that ‘he willeth all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.’ They believe, that what is termed predestination, is *conditional*, and founded on God’s foreknowledge, according to what is said by the apostles Paul and Peter: the former of whom says, ‘Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate:’ i. e. *define*, or *describe before-hand*, ‘to be conformed to the image of his Son:’ that is, those whom he foreknew as repenting of sin, and as believing on the Messiah, he did *describe* in the writings of the ancient prophets, as persons who should resemble him, whose disciples they should be;

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and that both in heart and life, as well drinking into his spirit, as copying his example. Thus with regard to election. As God *chooses* or *elects* men 'to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, to which he calls them by the gospel;' so those whom he foreknows as obeying this call, are termed by Peter, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.' That all who are called even by the gospel, do not obey this call, or do not persevere so to do, is certain, because our Lord assures us, *Many are called*, both to the marriage-feast, provided in the gospel, and to work in the vineyard, and *few chosen*. It is, therefore, the duty of all believers, even of such as have *precious faith*, (2 Pet. i. 10, 11.) to make their 'calling and election sure,' by adding to their faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and charity. On the other hand, those who do not do this, and therefore lack these graces, are the real reprobates, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. and if, nevertheless, they think themselves God's elect 'are blind, and cannot see afar off;' while those in whom these graces *are*, and with whom they continue and 'abound, shall never fall: but an entrance shall be ministered unto them into God's eternal kingdom.'

In a pamphlet, entitled "Serious Considerations on Absolute Predestination," published by Mr. Wesley, are the following observations:—

1. God delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but that all should live and be saved, and hath given his Son, that all that believe on him should be saved. He is the true light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world. And this light would work out the salvation of all, if not resisted.

2. But some assert, that God by an eternal and un-

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changeable decree, hath predestinated to eternal damnation the far greater part of mankind, and that absolutely, without any regard to their works, but only for the shewing the glory of his justice: and that for the bringing this about, he hath appointed miserable souls necessarily to walk in their wicked ways, that so his justice may lay hold on them, &c. &c.

3. This doctrine is novel. In the first four hundred years after Christ, no mention is made of it by any writer, great or small, in any part of the Christian church. The foundations of it were laid in the later writings of Augustine, when unguardedly writing against Pelagius. It was afterwards taught by Dominicus, a popish friar, and the monks of his order, and at last, it was unhappily taken up by John Calvin. This doctrine is, First, injurious to God, because it makes him the author of all sin. Secondly, It is injurious to God, because it represents him as delighting in the death of sinners, expressly contrary to his own declaration. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Thirdly, This doctrine is highly injurious to Christ, our mediator, and to the efficacy and excellency of his gospel. It supposes his mediation to be necessarily of no effect with regard to the greater part of mankind. Fourthly, The preaching of the gospel is a mere mockery and delusion, if many of those to whom it is preached, are by an irrevocable decree, shut out from being benefitted by it. Fifthly, This doctrine makes the coming of Christ, and his sacrifice upon the cross, instead of being a fruit of God's love to the world, to be one of the severest acts of God's indignation against mankind: it being only ordained (according to this doctrine) to save a very few, and for the hardening and increasing the damnation of the far greater number of mankind: namely, all those who do not believe: and the cause of this unbelief, according to this doctrine, is the counsel and

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decree of God. Sixthly, This doctrine is highly injurious to mankind; for it puts them in a far worse condition than the devils in hell. For these were some time in a capacity to have stood. They might have kept their happy estate, but would not. Whereas, according to this doctrine, many millions of men are tormented for ever, who never were happy, never could be, and never can be. Again, devils will not be punished for neglecting a great salvation: but human creatures will. In direct opposition to this, we affirm, that God willeth all to be saved; and hath given his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might be saved. There is hardly any other article of the Christian faith, so frequently, plainly, and positively asserted. It is that which makes the preaching of the gospel ‘Glad tidings to all,’ Luke ii. 10. otherwise, had this salvation been absolutely confined to a few, it had been ‘Sad tidings of great sorrow to most people.’ Read Col. i. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 1—6. Heb. ii. 9. John iii. 17.—xii. 47. 2 Pet. ii. 3, 9. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. 1 John ii. 1, 2. Ps. xvii. 14. Isa. xiii. 11. Matt. xviii. 7. John vii. 7.—viii. 26.—xii. 19.—xiv. 17.—xv. 18, 19.—xviii. 20. 1 Cor. i. 21.—ii. 12.—vi. 2. Gal. vi. 14. James i. 27. 2. Pet. ii. 20. 1 John ii. 15.—iii. 1.—iv. 4, 5.

Any one who desires further information upon this subject, may read, “Predestination calmly considered,” and the “Scripture Doctrine of Election and Reprobation,” by Mr. Wesley; together with Mr. Fletcher’s “Checks to Antinomianism,” where this subject is treated with the pen of a scribe well instructed, and with temper equal to his high endowments.

2. They believe the doctrine of *general redemption*, to be as explicitly declared in the holy scriptures, as that of God’s universal love. For as ‘God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever

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believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' as 'he sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved;' so we are expressly assured, 'that Christ is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe:' that 'he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time;' that 'when all were dead, he died for all;' and 'by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.' We are persuaded, therefore, with John, that he is the propitiation, not for our sins only,' (the sins of such as now believe, have believed, or shall believe hereafter,) 'but for the sins of the whole world,' not excluding even such as finally perish. For as Peter speaks of some, as 'denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing on themselves swift destruction:' so Paul signifies, that we may 'destroy with our meat,' or with an improper use of our Christian liberty, 'those for whom Christ died:' and thus, 'the weak brother for whom Christ died, being made to stumble and fall, may 'perish.'

3. The Methodists believe, That even the regenerate may and often do fall from grace both totally and finally. The apostle Paul mentions some who, having 'put away faith and a good conscience, concerning faith had made shipwreck,' and expressly mentions Hymeneus, Philetus, and Alexander, of that number, 1 Tim. i. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews also assures us, that even such as have been 'enlightened, tasted of the heavenly gift, been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, may so fall away, as that it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame.' Or, as he expresses himself in the tenth chapter of the same Epistle, 'sinning wilfully after they had received the knowledge of the

truth; they trample under foot the Son of God, count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy' or a common 'thing, and do despite to the spirit of his grace.' We are, therefore, obliged to believe, with Ezekiel, that even 'The righteous man may turn away from his righteousness, commit iniquity, and die therein.' With the apostle Paul, that the *just*, or *righteous* man, that *lives by faith*, may *draw back*, even unto *perdition*; that those who actually *stand by faith*, and therefore share in the divine goodness, through not *continuing in his goodness may be cut off*, and that finally and for ever: and with our Lord and Saviour, that those who are really branches in him, in consequence of their not still continuing to *abide in him*, may be *cast forth* as withered branches, and may be *gathered*, and *cast into the fire and burned*. It appears, therefore, to us, to be needful to caution all believers, in the language of the apostle, 'Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.' The Methodists agree with their own poet, who sa y:—

"The holiest who their watch remit,
May sink into the tempter's snare;
Will fall into the hellish pit,
Unless with humble, ceaseless prayer,
They to the last themselves deny,
And conquerors in the harness die."

In a pamphlet written by Mr. Wesley, and entitled, "Serious Thoughts upon the Perseverance of the Saints." are the following observations:—

I. By the SAINTS, I understand, those who are holy or righteous, in the judgment of God himself: those who are endued with the faith that purifies the heart, and produces a good conscience: those that are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual, invisible church: those

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who are branches of the true vine, of whom Christ says, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches:' those who so effectually know Christ, as by that knowledge to have escaped the pollutions of the world; those who see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, of the witness and fruits of the Spirit: those who live by faith in the Son of God: those who are sanctified by the blood of the covenant: those to whom all, or any of these characters belong, I mean by the term SAINTS.—But,

2. Can any one of these fall away? By *falling away*, we mean, not barely falling into sin. This, it is granted they may. But can they fall *totally*? Can any of these so fall from God as to perish everlastingly? Either side of this question is attended with great difficulties; such as reason alone could never remove. But to the law and to the testimony. On this authority, I believe a SAINT may fall away; that one that is holy or righteous in the judgment of God himself, may nevertheless so fall from God, as to perish everlastingly. 'When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, in his trespass, that he hath trespassed, and in his sin, that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.' Ezek. xviii. 24. That this is to be understood of eternal death, appears from the 26th verse: 'When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them, (here is temporal death) for his iniquity, that he hath done, he shall die:' (here is death eternal.) It appears farther, from the whole scope of the chapter, which is to prove, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' ver. 4. If you say, 'The soul here means the body,' I answer, that will die whether you sin or not. Again, 'When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own right-

teousness,' (yea, or to that promise as absolute and unconditional) 'and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed shall he die.' Ezek. xxxiii. 13. and ver. 18. When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby.' But how does this agree with Psalm lxxxix. 31—34. 'If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will not I utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail,' &c. There is no inconsistency between this declaration, and the declarations which we have just quoted from Ezekiel. The prophet declares the just judgment of God against every righteous man who falls from his righteousness. The psalmist declares, 'The loving-kindness which God sware unto David in his truth.' Read the whole psalm from verse 21. The covenant here spoken of, relates wholly to David and his seed or children. And even this covenant is not absolute, but conditional. The condition of repentance, in case of forsaking God's law, was implied, though not expressed. And this condition not being performed, God did also fail David, and did alter the thing that had gone out of his lips. He 'abhorred and forsook his anointed, the seed of David, whose throne (if they had repented) should have been as the days of heaven.' ver. 37, 38. Well, but Jeremiah, as God's mouth, says, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love,' &c. These words simply declare God's love to the Jewish church. To be convinced of this, read the whole passage, Jer. xxxi. 1—4. Let me observe, once for all, a fallacy that is almost constantly used, by almost all writers in favour of final perseverance. They apply assertions or prophecies to particular persons, which relate only to the church in

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general, and some only to the Jewish church and nation, as distinguished from all other people.

3. A *Saint* may fall from Grace. The apostle Paul asserts (1 Tim. i. 19.) that 'concerning faith' some 'have made shipwreck.' They had enjoyed faith, or they could not have 'put it away.' Their loss of faith was a wreck: a total wreck and final loss: for a ship once wrecked is never a ship again, but is totally and finally lost. But, you say, 'He that believeth shall be saved.' But, this scripture does not mean, that every man who *now* has faith, shall *certainly* and *inevitably* obtain eternal salvation. If so, then by all the rules of speech, the other part of the sentence must mean, 'he that believeth not' at this moment, shall *certainly*, and *inevitably* 'be damned.' The genuine meaning is, 'He that believeth,' if he continue to believe 'shall be saved:' but 'he that believeth not,' and continues *not* to believe, 'shall be damned.' It is true, as you say, that Christ says, John iii. 36, and John vi. 24, that 'he that believeth hath everlasting life. I answer, (1.) The love of God is everlasting life; it is the life of heaven. Every believer loves God; and therefore has everlasting life. (2.) Every one that believes is therefore passed from death unto life, from spiritual death unto spiritual life: and (3.) 'Shall not come into condemnation,' if he continue in the faith unto the end, John viii. 51.

Those who are grafted into the good olive-tree, the spiritual invisible church, may, nevertheless, so fall from God as to perish everlastingly. 'Some of the branches are broken off,' says Paul, Rom. xi. 20, 21, 22. The olive-tree is not barely the visible, but the invisible church. But, you say, the 29th verse says, 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.' The preceding verse shews, that we are to understand this of the unconditional election of the Jewish nation; that God did

not repent of the blessings he had given them ; and that God has still blessings in store for the seed of Abraham.

See Num. xxiii. 19. Nor does this militate against the *unchangeableness* of God. Rather, it shews him to be unchangeably holy, always loving righteousness, and hating iniquity ; and unchangeably just. Nay, it does not prove any thing against God's *faithfulness*. He fulfils every promise to those whom he made it to, namely, those who fulfil the condition of the promise : particularly that promise, 1 Cor. x. 13. ' God is faithful in that he will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear,' &c. ' Faithful to establish and keep you from evil,' Thes. v. 19. Faithful to confirm you unto the end. 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. But you say, no condition is either expressed or implied, where Paul speaks of being fully persuaded that ' Nothing would separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus.' This assertion will bear a dispute. But were it just as you say, it only proves that the apostle was at *that time* fully persuaded of his own perseverance. And I doubt not but many believers at this day, have the very same assurance, termed in scripture, the *full assurance of hope*.

Our Lord speaks of some of *the branches* as *not abiding* in him, but being *broken off, withered, and burnt*. And after being *cast into the fire and burnt*, there could be no possibility of grafting them in again.

Mr. Wesley argues in a similar way, respecting other scriptures which are supposed to favour the doctrine of absolute final perseverance. The pamphlet is but small, yet contains much dispassionate and close argument.

4. They believe, That though many continue in impenitence and unbelief, and so perish eternally, it is not to be attributed to God's having unconditionally predestinated them to eternal death, or to his withholding from them his saving grace ; but to their own *free, unnecessitated,*

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and *avoidable* rejection or abuse of that grace. For although there may be a difference as to the *means* and *opportunities* of obtaining faith and salvation, offered to different nations and conditions of mankind; yet does God bestow as much light and grace on all, as is sufficient to make them acquainted with himself, and with his will concerning them, and to enable them to worship and serve him acceptably, according to the dispensation under which they are. With respect to those to whom the holy scriptures and the gospel of his grace are committed, he affords them, grace sufficient to enable them to improve these advantages to his glory and their own salvation. That is to say, he gives them grace sufficient to beget in them *repentance unto life*, and *saving faith*, and to carry on his good work in them to the end. Not only those, therefore, who actually *repent, believe*, and are *converted*, but those also who remain *impenitent* and *unbelieving*, have that grace afforded them whereby they *might* comply with these conditions of salvation. For those whom God calls to repentance and faith, he calls in *good earnest*, and not merely in *shew* and *pretence*, as well by his word and the dispensations of his providence, as by his inward grace, with a good will and sincere intention to convert and save them. So that those who continue in sin, perish through the abuse of their own free-will, like the Jews, ‘love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil;’ resist the Holy Ghost; ‘judge themselves unworthy of eternal life;’ reject, ‘and thereby make void the counsel of God against themselves:’ close their eyes against the divine light, harden their hearts against the fear and love of God, and ‘will not come to Christ that they may have life,’ lest, says our Lord, ‘they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and be converted and healed.’

SECT. X.—*The Covenant of Grace.*

The Methodists believe, that the covenant of grace has been administered and renewed in different ages of the world. In the patriarchal ages it was administered by *promises, prophecies, sacrifices*, and at last by *circumcision*. Under the Mosaic dispensation, generally termed *the law*, this covenant was exhibited in the paschal lamb, the scape goat, the priesthood of Aaron, and a variety of sacrifices, oblations, and ablutions, and in types and shadows, the Messiah to come, and the privileges and blessings of the new covenant. These institutions were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the spirit, to instruct and build up the church of God in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom the true members thereof had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation. This is called the Old Testament.

Under the gospel, Christ the substance, prefigured by these shadows, being exhibited, the ordinances in and by which this covenant is dispensed, are *the preaching of the word*, and the administration of the sacraments of *baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*: which ordinances, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity, and less external glory, yet hold forth this covenant in greater fulness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles. This is called the New Testament. There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations.

Under this covenant of grace, and in all the dispensations thereof, the Lord Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man; the *prophet, priest, and king*, the *head* and *saviour* of his church, the *heir of all things* and *judge of the world*. It pleased the Father, that in

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Him all fulness should dwell, that being *full of grace and truth*, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a mediator and surety, which office he took not upon himself, but was called thereto by the Father, who committed all power and judgment into his hands, and gave him commandment to execute the same. This office he willingly undertook, and in order to the proper discharge of it, was *made under the law*, which he perfectly fulfilled; endured most grievous anguish in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified, and died; was buried, and remained under the power of death till the third day, yet saw no corruption. He then rose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered; with which also rendered spiritual and glorious, he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father, making intercession, and at the end of the world, shall come again to judge the quick and the dead, the great and the small of all nations.

By his perfect obedience and the sacrifice of himself, once offered to God through the eternal Spirit, he hath fully satisfied the demands of divine justice, affronted by the sins of man, and hath procured, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all that truly repent, believe in him, and are faithful unto death.

It is necessary to observe also, that although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and the benefits thereof were communicated unto penitent believing souls, in all ages, successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices by which he was revealed and signified to be the 'seed of the woman which should bruise the serpent's head,' and 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;' being 'the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.' Nor were the devout

heathens who feared God and wrought righteousness, excluded from an interest in his mediation, though they were unacquainted with his name, he being the Saviour of all men that are saved, but especially of those who explicitly believe in him.

SECT. XI.—*Marriage—Loyalty—The Sabbath—The visible Church—Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.*

Touching sundry other matters.

1. Respecting marriage, the Methodists believe it to be between *one man and one woman*, and that it was ordained for the mutual help of both parties, and for the legitimate and regular increase of mankind; that it is lawful and honourable; but that it is not lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time. And Christians ought to marry *only in the Lord*, and therefore should not be united in wedlock with *Infidels, Jews, Mahometans, Heathens*. Neither should a true Christian marry a person who is only a Christian in name, but should take care if he or she do marry, not to be unequally yoked together with such as do not believe in, fear, worship, and serve God.

2. The Methodists believe, that God, the supreme Lord and King of the whole world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be, under him, over the people, for his own glory, and the public good: and that they should be for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. Hence, it is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of magistrates, when duly called thereto. And it is the duty of the people to pray for their rulers, and all magistrates, superior and subordinate, to honour their persons, to pay them tribute, and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority for conscience sake.

The Sabbath.

They believe also, that the King hath the chief power in the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his other dominions, unto whom the chief government of this empire appertains; and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign jurisdiction.

3. They believe it to be their duty to keep the first day of the week as a sabbath. This, before Christ, was on the last day of the week; but from the time of his resurrection, was changed into the first day of the week, and is in scripture called, *The Lord's Day*, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian sabbath. This they believe to be set apart by God, and for his worship, by a *positive, moral, and perpetual* commandment. And they think it to be agreeable to the law of nature, as well as divine institution, that a due proportion of time should be set apart for the worship of God. And, perhaps, no proportion could have been so proper as that of one day out of seven. Less might have been too little, and more might have been more than could have been spared from other employments.

This day ought to be kept holy unto the Lord, and men and women ought so to order their affairs, and prepare their hearts, that they may not only have a holy rest on that day, from worldly employments, words, and thoughts, but spend the day in the public and private duties of piety. No part of the day should be employed in any other way, except in works of mercy and necessity. On this day, they believe it to be their duty to worship God, and that not only in form, but at the same time in spirit and in truth. Therefore, they employ themselves in prayer and thanksgiving, in reading and meditating on the scriptures, in hearing the public preaching of God's word, in singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, in Christian conversation, and in commemorating the dying love of the Lord Jesus Christ. And they believe, that no par

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of religious worship, under the gospel, is confined to or made more acceptable, by any particular place in which it may be performed, whether built and set apart for worship or otherwise. And with them it is a prevailing idea, that God must be worshipped in *spirit*, daily, in private families, in the closet, and in the public assemblies.

4. They believe *The visible church of Christ*, to consist of a number of believing and obedient people, among whom the word of God is preached in purity, and who walk, not only in the commands, but in all the ordinances of Christ; that the church is not confined to one nation, as under the law, but is universal, and will continue, and increase, to the end of the world.

5. They believe baptism to be an ordinance appointed by Christ; not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be to him a sign or emblem of regeneration, and of his presenting himself to God, through Jesus Christ, to *walk in newness of life*. It is also a covenant of grace, and by Christ's own appointment, is to continue in the church to the end of the world. The person is to be baptized in water, by a Christian minister, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And baptism may be rightly administered, either by immersion, or by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person. This ordinance of baptism ought to be administered, not only to adult believers, but to all infants, whose fathers or mothers are true Christians. But because proselyting was enjoined as previous to baptism, in our Saviour's charge to his apostles, when he sent them out to Christianize the world, some have inferred that infants are not to be baptized. But if the argument was as strong as they suppose it to be, it would follow, that infants cannot be saved: for it is declared, 'he that believeth not shall be damned.' But the truth is, that both Mark xvi. 15. and Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

The Lord's Supper.

must be interpreted according to the subjects treated of in them, which are plainly adult persons: and therefore no argument can be drawn thence concerning either the baptism or salvation of infants. They who conclude that infants are not capable of baptism, because they cannot believe, must conclude also that they cannot be saved; faith being more expressly required to salvation than baptism. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but though he says, 'he that believeth not shall be damned,' he does not say, 'He that is *not* baptized shall be damned.' Baptism is the same under the Christian dispensation, that circumcision was under the dispensation of Moses: and all the arguments against infant baptism would have been equally conclusive against infant circumcision. Circumcision was a sign and seal of a covenant entered into with God: and baptism is intended to be the same. Yet, though baptism ought not to be neglected, grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto, or connected with it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all who are baptized are certainly regenerated. Lastly, This ordinance is to be administered only once to any one person.

6. In the same night that Jesus was betrayed, he instituted the ordinance termed, *The Lord's Supper*, or the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. This he ordered his followers to do in remembrance of him. The Methodists believe that it ought to be observed by the church, to the end of the world, in remembrance of his sacrifice of himself in his death and passion, for the spiritual benefit of believers; to engage them more strongly to love and serve him; as a bond of union among themselves; and as a sign of their mutual trust in and love to Christ; and of their mutual hope of being with him hereafter. 'Is it not the communion of the body and blood of Christ?' All true Christians have fellowship with him, especially

State of separate Spirits.

in this ordinance, as to his grace, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory; and being united with each other in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as conduce to their mutual good, whether in matters temporal or spiritual. They are bound, especially, to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and all such spiritual exercises as tend to their mutual edification. And they ought to help one another in temporal things according to their several necessities and abilities, which communion as far as we have opportunity, is to be extended to 'all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.' But this communion, notwithstanding, which the saints have with each other, doth not take away or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods or possessions.

SECT. XII.—*State of separate Spirits—Day of Judgment—Hell and Heaven.*

The Methodists believe in a state of separate spirits after death, a general resurrection, a day of judgment, and a state of eternal happiness and eternal misery.

1. They believe in a state of separate spirits: That the bodies of men, after death, return to dust and see corruption; but that their souls neither *die* nor *sleep*, but have an immortal subsistence, and immediately 'return to God who gave them.' The souls of the righteous, being made perfect, are received into paradise, where they are with Christ in unspeakable felicity, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. The souls of the wicked, immediately after the death of their bodies, lift up their eyes in hell, being in torments, (Luke xvi. 23.) to be reserved to the day of judgment,

2. The Methodists believe hell to be a dark bottomless

Day of Judgment.

pit, full of fire and brimstone; that the wicked will spend their time there in weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth; that every part of both body and soul will be tormented at once: that their bodies will be tormented by lying and burning in flaming fire; that their souls will be tormented by a sense of the wrath of God; by pride, self-will, malice, and envy; by grief, desire, fear, rage, and despair; that their tormentors will be their own consciences, the devils, and one another; that they will have no rest from torment day or night; and that this torment will never have an end. But so far as it respects the body it cannot take place till the day of judgment. And as the wicked go to hell when they die, so the righteous are carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, or heaven.

Mr. Wesley published a sermon on *The Torments of Hell*. The text is Mark ix. 48. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*

He observes, that every revealed truth is of importance: yet some are of greater importance than others. And we may judge of their special importance from the circumstance of their being frequently mentioned in the bible. This is the case with the awful truth now before us. Our Lord, who uses no *vain repetitions*, repeats it over and over in the same chapter.

And the consideration of these terrible truths is not proper merely for enormous sinners. Read Luke xii. 1—4. It behoves even those who fear and love God, to consider what is said in the bible about a state of future punishments. The punishment of those who will have their portion with the devil and his angels, will consist of *what they lose*, and *what they feel*.

1. *What they lose.* This *punishment of loss*, commences the moment the soul is separated from the body. In that instant, the soul loses all the pleasures of the senses. The smell, the taste, the touch, delight no more. The or-

Hell.

gans that ministered to them are spoiled, and the objects that used to gratify them are removed far away. All the pleasures of the imagination are at an end. There is no grandeur, or light, or novelty, in those dark abodes. There is no music, but that of groans and shrieks, of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; of curses and blasphemies against God, or cutting reproaches of one another. Nor is there any thing to gratify the sense of honour: they are the heirs of everlasting shame and contempt. Thus are they totally separated from all the *things* they were fond of in this world. And they will lose all the *persons* they here loved. They are torn away from their nearest and dearest relations, every friend, and all the pleasures they yielded them.

But there will be a loss still greater than any, or all, of these: they will lose their place in the paradise of God. They will then understand the value of what they have vilely cast away. And paradise is only the porch of heaven. It is *there* is the *fulness* of joy and pleasures *for evermore*. They will then know and feel, that God alone is the centre of all created spirits; and that a spirit can have no rest out of him. It would seem the apostle had this in view, 2 Thes. i. 8, 9. Banishing from the presence of the Lord is the very essence of destruction to a spirit that was made for God. And if that banishment lasts for ever, it is *everlasting destruction*. But,

II. Their punishment from what they will *feel* or *endure*, (1.) There will be a *worm that will not die*. This will include a guilty conscience, self-condemnation, sorrow, shame, remorse, and a sense of the wrath of God. What is any anguish in this world, yea, even that of a wounded spirit, when compared with this. Their souls will be wholly awakened, to feel all the wrath of an angry God. And, add to all this, what they will feel from unholy passion, from fear, rage, and despair; and from un-

Hell,

holy tempers, envy, jealousy, malice, and revenge. To these we may add, hatred of God, and all his creatures. Thus will *their* worm torment them.

And the *fire is not quenched*. Perhaps the meaning is, the *fire* will be essentially the same, to all who are tormented therein: only perhaps more intense to some than others, according to their degree of guilt. But *their worm* will not, cannot be the same. It will be infinitely varied, according to their various kinds, as well as degrees of wickedness. This variety will arise partly from the just judgment of God, *rewarding every man according to his works*. Variety of punishment will likewise arise from the very nature of the thing. The more wickedness a man brings to hell, the more misery he will find there. And his misery will be varied according to the various kinds of his wickedness. It was therefore proper to say *the fire*, in general; but *their worm* in particular.

Some have questioned whether there be any fire, that is, material fire, in hell. But if there be *any* fire, it must be *material*. For what is *immaterial* fire? The same as immaterial water or earth! Both the one and the other is absolute nonsense, a contradiction in terms. We must therefore affirm this fire to be material, or else deny its existence. But suppose there should be no fire, what would sinners gain by that, seeing all allow it is either fire or something worse? And our Lord speaks of it as if it were *real* fire. This none can deny. Some aver, 'It is not possible that fire should burn always. For by the immutable laws of nature, it consumes whatever is thrown into it. And by the same law, as soon as it has consumed its fuel, it is itself consumed, and goes out.'

In the present constitution of things, and during the present laws of nature, all this is true. But, the present laws of nature, are not immutable. With the present

Hell.

constitution of things, the present laws of nature will cease. Afterwards, nothing will dissolve, or consume, any more. And, therefore, were it true, that fire consumes all things now, it does not follow, that it would do so after the whole frame of nature has undergone a vast and universal change.

And has not God already given some proof of what will be hereafter? Is not the *linum asbestum*, the incombustible flax, known in most parts of Europe? If you take a towel or handkerchief made of this, (one of which may now be seen in the British Museum,) you may throw it into the hottest fire, and when it is taken out again, it will be observed, upon the nicest experiment, not to have lost one grain of weight. We will consider,

III. Two or three circumstances attending the never-dying worm, and the unquenchable fire. (1.) Consider the company that will surround every one that gets into that place of torment. In our public prisons, even condemned criminals often exclaim, ‘They wish they were hanged out of the way, rather than be plagued with the wretches round about them.’ But what are the most abandoned wretches compared to the inhabitants of hell? None of the inhabitants of earth are yet perfectly emptied of all good: certainly will not be so during life; and perhaps not till the day of judgment. But the damned in hell have no good remaining in them, but are totally, and in the highest degree, wicked.

(2.) All these torments, of body and soul, are without intermission. *They have no rest, day or night, but the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.* According to the present constitution of the world, God has wisely and graciously ordained, that day and night should succeed each other. And the very extremity of pain, suspends or mitigates it. But not so in hell.

(3.) Of this duration *there is no end.* Nothing but

Heaven—Day of Judgment.

eternity is the term of this torment. And who can count the drops of rain, or the sands of the sea, or the days of eternity? Every suffering is softened, if there be any hope, though distant, of deliverance from it. But here 'Hope never comes, that comes to all! From that place of torment there is no redemption.'

To conclude, what a guard should these considerations be, against any temptations from pleasure? Will you lose for any of these poor earthly, sensual pleasures, the pleasures of heaven, the society of angels, the company of the spirits of just men made perfect, of Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and of God the judge of all? What folly, what madness equal to this! Are you tempted by pain either of body or mind? Compare things present with things future. What is any pain of body, or of mind, to *the worm that never dieth*?

Lastly, let us be thankful, that we who have so much deserved it, are not already plunged into it. And let us take care that we never come into that place of torment.

3. The Methodists believe heaven to be a place of light and glory; that good men will live there in joy and happiness greater than they can now desire or think; that they will suffer nothing there; will have spiritual bodies; that their chief happiness will consist in the enjoyment of God, that is, in knowing, loving, and seeing God face to face; that they will spend their time in singing praise to God; and that this happiness will last for ever and ever.

4. They believe God has appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by Christ Jesus. The Judge will be the Son of God and the Saviour of man; he will come accompanied by angels, and with flaming fire; the dead will be raised up, and stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; the books will be opened, and every work will be brought into judgment

Day of Judgment.

with every secret thing; and the Judge, will say to the righteous, who will stand on his right hand, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.' And he will say to the wicked, who will stand upon his left hand, 'Depart, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'

The chief end for which God hath appointed this day, is the manifestation of the glory of his perfections, as of his *power* in raising the dead, and collecting the universe of his rational creatures to his bar: his *wisdom* in knowing all the actions, words, dispositions and thoughts of all mankind, with the various circumstances and qualities of each; his *holiness* and *justice* in hating and punishing sin, and his *mercy* and *love* towards his believing and obedient children. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of joy and gladness, which shall proceed from the perfect vision and enjoyment of him. But such as in the days of their flesh 'knew not God, and obeyed not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.

But while Christ would have us to be fully assured that there will be a day of Judgment, both to deter men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the righteous in their afflictions; so he will keep the exact period of time, when that day shall be unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always ready and watchful, not knowing at what hour the Lord will come; and may be always prepared to meet him, and to say, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

Mr. Wesley by request of the Sheriff, preached at the Bedford assizes, March 10, 1758. His text was, Rom. xiv. 10. "*We shall all stand before the judgment-seat*

Day of Judgment.

of Christ." After a suitable introduction, he proceeds to treat,

I. Of the chief circumstances which will precede the great judgment. (1.) 'God will shew signs in the earth beneath,' Acts ii. 19. Luke xxi. 11. Rev. xvi. 20. Joel ii. 30, 31. Luke xxi. 15, 26. Joel iii. 25. Thes. iv. 16. Rev. xx. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 53.

(2.) The Son of man shall send forth his angels over the earth, Matt. xxiv. 31, &c. The Lord shall come with clouds, in his glory, Matt. xxv. 31. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and the dead, small and great, shall stand before God. And the books will be opened, (a figurative expression, plainly referring to the manner of proceeding among men,) and the dead shall be judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works. He considers,

II. The judgment itself. And (1.) *The Judge: that man whom he hath ordained, the Son of man, and yet the Son of God; the gracious Redeemer of mankind.*

(2.) *The day:* it is emphatically styled *the day of the Lord*. The present time is *our day*: but when time shall be ended, then will come the day of the Lord. How long it will last, we cannot tell. From the expression of Peter, 2Pet. iii. 8. 'One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,' some of the ancient fathers inferred, that the *day of judgment* would be a thousand years. And it seems they did not go beyond the truth: nay, probably they did not come up to it. For if we consider the number of persons to be judged, and the things to be inquired into, it would appear, that a thousand years will hardly be sufficient for the transactions of that day. Probably it may comprise several thousand years. But God shall reveal this in its season.

(3.) As to the *place* of judgment, the scripture gives no explicit account. Some, yea, many have supposed it will

Day of Judgment.

be on earth, where the works were done, and that in order that there may be sufficient room, the Lord will employ the angels of his strength,

“ To smooth and lengthen out the boundless space,
And spread an æra for all human race.”

But it is more probable that it will be *in the clouds* 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

(4.) The *persons* to be judged will be as countless as the drops of rain, or the sands of the sea: a great multitude which no man can number. Every man, woman, and child, since the world began till time shall be no more. And the common supposition is, which does not seem absurd, that the earth bears at no one time, less than four hundred millions of living human beings. In a succession of generations, for seven thousand years, what a congregation will this make ?

(5.) *The account to be given. Every work shall be brought into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Words as well as works, yea, the very secrets of the heart, will then be brought into judgment. God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and the very thoughts and intents of the heart. In that day shall be discovered every inward working of every human soul: every appetite, passion, inclination, and affection, with the various combinations of them, with every temper and disposition that constitute the whole complex character of each individual.*

(6.) ‘ The King will say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father,’ &c. All the good they did upon earth, will be recited before men and angels. All their good desires, intentions, thoughts, and dispositions, will also be remembered. And all their sufferings, for the name of Jesus, for righteousness sake, and for the testimony of a good conscience.

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(7.) Many believe that the evil deeds of those who die in the Lord will not then be brought forward, and refer to Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. Jer. xxxi. 34. Heb. viii. 12. But the full display of the glory of God, and the clear and perfect manifestation of his wisdom, justice, power, and mercy towards the heirs of salvation, seems to render it necessary, that all the circumstances of their lives should be placed in open view, together with all their tempers, desires, thoughts and intentions of their hearts. Otherwise it would not appear from what a depth of sin and misery the grace of God had delivered them. It will be sufficient for them, that 'their sins will be remembered no more' to their condemnation: and this is the plain meaning of the promise, Jer. xxxi. 34.

(8.) After the righteous are judged, the King will turn to them on the left hand, and judge them also according to their works. And not only their *works* shall be judged, but also their words, desires, affections, tempers, thoughts, and designs. Consider,

III. Some circumstances which will follow the judgment. (1.) The execution of the sentence pronounced on the evil and the good. 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' The same word is used in both cases: it follows that either the punishment lasts for ever, or the reward too will come to an end.

(2.) The heavens will pass away, and being on fire will be dissolved, Rev. xx. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 12.—v. 10.

(3.) New heavens, and a new earth will succeed. 2 Pet. v. 13. Isa. lxv. 7. Rev. xx. 1, 3, 4.—xxii. 3, 4.

CHAPTER III.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE METHODISTS.

THE rules of Discipline were not all framed at once; but at almost every conference some addition has been made, as circumstances have been supposed to require. Hence they are very numerous, and, in some instances, do not perfectly harmonize. It would be a great service rendered to the connexion to digest and simplify these rules. Something of this kind is attempted in this chapter: but in giving a faithful account, matters must be stated as they really exist.

Some of the rules were made to suit circumstances, which in their own nature were but temporary. Some were merely prudential, others indispensable; and the candid reader, when he considers the vast variety of circumstances in which Methodism has been placed, during more than seventy years; the many peculiar difficulties which have occurred; together with the variety of disposition and information possessed by the preachers, will allow, that the greatest wonder is, that so much consistency has been maintained, and that so little requires expunging or altering.

The rules of the society, as drawn up and signed by Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, May 1, 1743, in the very infancy of Methodism, and which still remain in force, furnish us with the most early, authentic, and important document respecting the discipline of the Methodists. The next document in point of authenticity, and which may be considered as a continuation of the rules, or a supplement, is contained in what has been added to the original rules, by the order of the conference, stands

Rules of the Society.

connected with the old rules in the copy which I here insert.

The General Rules of the United Societies, in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, &c. to which are added, sundry particular Regulations made in some late Conferences of the Preachers.

RULES OF THE SOCIETY.

1. IN the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to me in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired, (as did two or three more the next day,) that I would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come, which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That we might have more time for this great work, I appointed a day when they might all come together; which, from thenceforward, they did every week; viz. on Thursday in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) I gave those advices from time to time which I judged most needful for them; and we always concluded our meeting with prayer suitable to their several necessities.

2. This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in London, and then in other places. Such a society is no tother, than, "A company of men having the form, and seeking the power of godliness: united, in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation."

3. That it may the more easily be discerned, whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are

Rules of the Society.

about twelve persons in every class; one of whom is styled the leader. It is his business.

(1.) To see each person in his class, once a week at least, in order,

To inquire how their souls prosper;

To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require;

To receive what they are willing to give, towards the support of the gospel.

(2.) To meet the minister and the stewards of the society once a week, in order

To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.

To pay to the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding: And

To shew their account of what each person has contributed.

4. There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, viz. "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and be saved from their sins:" but wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shewn by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation.

First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind: especially that which is most generally practised. Such as

The taking the name of God in vain:

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling:

Drunkenness; *buying or selling spirituous liquors: or drinking them*, unless in cases of extreme necessity:

Fighting, quarrelling, brawling; brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing: the using many words in buying or selling:

Rules of the Society.

The buying or selling uncustomed goods :

The giving or taking things on usury, i. e. unlawful interest :

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation : particularly speaking evil of magistrates, or of ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us :

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: As,

The putting on of gold or costly apparel :

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus :

The singing those songs, or reading those books, that do not tend to the knowledge or love of God:

Softness, and needless self-indulgence :

Laying up treasure upon earth :

Borrowing without a probability of paying: or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

5. It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, By doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity: doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible to all men;

To their bodies, of the ability that God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick, or in prison:

To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with: trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that, "We are not to do good, unless our hearts be free to it."

By doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be: employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business: and so much the more, because the world will love its own, and them *only*.

By all possible *diligence and frugality*, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race that is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily*; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ; to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world; and looking that men should *say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake*.

6. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation:

Thirdly, by attending on all the ordinances of God: such are,

The public worship of God:

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded:

The supper of the Lord:

Family and private prayer:

Searching the scriptures: and

Fasting or abstinence.

7. These are the General Rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them, who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways; we will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

May 1, 1743.

JOHN WESLEY.

CHARLES WESLEY.

Receiving Members into the Society.

The following resolution was entered in the Minutes of the Conference, in 1797.

“We have determined that all the rules which relate to the societies, leaders, stewards, local preachers, trustees, and quarterly meetings, shall be published, with the rules of the society, for the benefit and convenience of all the members.”

A new edition of the rules being called for; in execution of the above-mentioned determination, the following being the most material, are here subjoined.

RULES RELATING TO THE SOCIETIES.

I. Of Receiving Members into the Society.

1. The leaders' meeting has a right to declare any person on trial improper to be received into the society: and, after such declaration, the superintendent shall not admit such person into society.

2. Neither the superintendents nor any other preachers, shall give tickets to any, till they are recommended by a leader, with whom they have met, at least, two months on trial.

3. No preacher shall give notes, (admitting persons on trial) to any but those who are recommended by one he knows, or till they have met three or four times in a class.

4. He must give them the rules of the society, the first time they meet.

5. As some of our people have, in different parts of the kingdom, been imposed on, in various ways, by swindlers, who professed themselves members of our society, let no person be received into any society, without a certificate, signed by one of the itinerant preachers in the circuit, from whence he professes to have come. 1799.

II. *Of the Exclusion of Members from the Society.*

1. The far greater number of those that are separated from us, exclude themselves by neglecting to meet in class, and use the other means of grace, and so gradually forsake us. With regard to others,

2. Our rule is fixt, and our custom expressed in the preceding rules of society, where it is said, "If there be any among us, who observe them not, who habitually break any of them,—we will admonish him of the error of his ways; we will bear with him for a season: but then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us."

3. No person must be expelled from the society for any breach of our rules, or even for manifest immorality, till such fact or crime has been proved at a leaders' meeting.

III. *Of permitting Strangers to be present at the Society Meetings and Love-Feasts.*

1. Let every other meeting of the society be for the members of the society only; and let no strangers be admitted. At other times some may be permitted to be present: but the same person not above three times.

2. Let all the members of the society shew their tickets: and if the stewards and leaders are not exact, others must be employed that have more resolution.

3. Let no person attend any love-feast, without a note from the preacher.

4. Let no love-feast be appointed but by the consent of the superintendent; nor any funeral sermon be preached, without his consent, and for those only who die happy in the Lord.

IV. *Of Service in Church Hours.*

The cases in which it has been agreed to allow service in what are commonly called church hours, are,—

1. When the church minister, rector, vicar, or curate, is a notoriously wicked man.

2. When he preaches Arian, Socinian, or any other equally pernicious doctrine.

3. When there are not churches in the town or parish sufficient to contain the people.

4. When there is no church within two or three miles.

5. Where a majority of the trustees of any chapel, on the one hand, and of the stewards and leaders of the society belonging to that chapel, on the other, allow of and request it: and as to places where there is a society and no chapel, wherever the majority of the stewards and leaders of that society testify that it is the wish of the people, and that it will cause no division among them.

6. Wherever divine service is performed in England, on the Lord's day, in church hours, the officiating preacher shall read either the service of the church, our venerable father's abridgment of it, or, at least the lessons appointed by the calendar. But we recommend either the full service or the abridgment.

V. *Concerning the Administration of the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's-Supper in our Societies.*

1. The sacrament of the Lord's-supper shall not be administered in any chapel, except a majority of the trustees of that chapel on the one hand, and the majority of the stewards and leaders belonging to that chapel, (as the best qualified to give the sense of the people,) on the other, allow it. Nevertheless, in all case the consent of

conference shall be first obtained before this ordinance shall be administered.

2. Where there is a society but no chapel, if the majority of the stewards and leaders of that society testify, in writing, to the conference, that it is the wish of the people that the Lord's-supper should be administered among them, and that no separation will be made thereby, their desire shall be granted.

3. The sacrament of the Lord's-supper shall not be administered to a society in a private house, within two miles of a Methodist-chapel.

4. The Lord's supper shall be administered by the superintendent only, or such of his helpers as are in full connexion, and as he shall appoint; provided that no preacher be required to give it against his own inclination; and should it be granted to any place where the preachers on the circuit are all unwilling to give it, the superintendent shall, in that case, invite a neighbouring preacher who is properly qualified to give it.

5. It shall be administered at such times and in such manner, as the conference shall appoint. And the conference agree that the Lord's-supper shall be administered among us on Sunday evenings only; except the majority of the stewards and leaders desire it in church hours; or where it has already been administered in those hours. Nevertheless, it shall never be administered on those Sundays on which it is administered in the parish church.

6. The Lord's-supper shall always be administered in England according to the form of the established church: but the person who administers shall have liberty to give out hymns, to use exhortation and extemporary prayer.

7. Wherever the Lord's-supper shall be administered according to the above-mentioned regulations, it shall always be continued, except the conference order otherwise.

Conformity to the World, and Sabbath-Breaking.

8. No person shall be suffered, on any pretence, to partake of the Lord's-supper among us, unless he be a member of Society, or receive a note of admission from the superintendent, (or the preacher administering,) which note must be renewed quarterly. And if any leaders, stewards, or trustees, refuse to be regulated by this rule, the sacrament shall not be administered where this is the case.

9. The administration of baptism, and the burial of the dead, shall be determined according to the regulations above-mentioned respecting the Lord's-supper.

VI. On conformity to the World, and Sabbath-Breaking.

1. Those school masters and school mistresses who receive dancing masters into their schools, and those parents who employ dancing masters for their children, shall be no longer members of our society.

2. To prevent, or remedy, the evils of dram-drinking, evil-speaking, unprofitable conversation, lightness, expensiveness, or gaiety of apparel; and contracting debts without due care to discharge them, or smuggling, buying or selling uncustomed goods, the preacher shall solemnly and frequently warn the societies against these evils, and inform them that they who are guilty of them, cannot be permitted to remain with us.

3. We strongly recommend, to all the members of our societies, the religious observation of the Lord's day, and desire our superintendents to exclude from the society, all who buy or sell on that sacred day, except in case of medicine for the sick, or for supplying necessities for funerals.

4. No member of our society must employ any barber on the Lord's day. And all our people, who possibly

Marrying with Unbelievers, &c.

can, are desired to employ only those barbers, who conscientiously abstain from sabbath-breaking.

5. No member of our society must make any wake, or feast, or go to any on the Lord's day, but bear a public testimony against them.

VII. *Of Marrying with Unbelievers.*

Some of our members have married with unbelievers, yea, with unawakened persons. This has had fatal effects. They have had either a cross for life, or turned back unto perdition. To put a stop to this, every preacher is enjoined to enforce frequently the apostle's caution. "Be not unequally yoked." And he is openly to declare, that whoever does this shall be expelled the society. When any such are expelled, he is to subjoin a suitable exhortation, and to urge all single persons to take no step in so weighty a matter, without advising with the most serious of their Christian friends.

VIII. *Of Bankruptcies.*

To prevent scandal, when any of our members become bankrupts, the superintendent shall talk with them at large. And if any of them have not kept fair accounts, or have been concerned in the base practice of raising money by coining notes, (commonly called the Bill-trade) he shall be expelled immediately.*

IX. *Of Loyalty and Subjection to the King and Government.*

None of us shall, either in writing or conversation,

* This rule refers to what are commonly called *accommodation bills*: the Methodists deem it dishonest to issue a bill, except on real property.

Rules relating to the Officers of the Societies.

speak lightly or irreverently of the government under which he lives. We are to observe that the oracles of God, command us to be subject to the higher powers : and that ' honour to the King, is there connected with the ' fear of God.' 1792.

X. Of Days of Fasting.

A general fast shall be held in all our societies, the first Friday after New-Year's-day ; after Lady-day ; after Midsummer-day ; and after Michaelmas-day.

RULES RELATING TO THE OFFICERS OF THE
SOCIETIES.

I. Of the Appointment, or Change of Stewards and Leaders.

1. No person shall be appointed a leader, or society-steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with a leaders'-meeting ; the nomination to be in the superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation, in the leaders'-meeting.

2. As several inconveniencies have arisen respecting the change of stewards ; to remedy this, let it be observed, that the office of a steward ceases at the end of the year : and every superintendent is required to change one steward at least : so that no steward may be in office above two years together, except in some extraordinary cases.

3. The proper time for changing the circuit-stewards, is at the quarterly-meeting, when the superintendent shall consult all who are present, respecting the most proper person, or persons, to act in that capacity.

4. The place for appointing or changing the steward

Local Preachers, and their Meetings.

of any particular society, is the leaders'-meeting of that society. For in the general, 'No person can be received as a society-officer among us without the consent of that meeting, to which he particularly belongs; nor can any officer be appointed except on the same plan.' Minutes of 1797.

5. The superintendent of every circuit shall invite the general steward of his circuit, to be present at the annual meeting of the district committee, during the settling of every thing relating to the finances of the district; and every circuit-steward shall have a right to be present, and to advise at the settlement of all financial matters. 1801.

II. *Of the Local Preachers, and their Meetings.*

1. The superintendent shall regularly meet the local preachers once a quarter, and no person shall receive a plan as a local preacher, nor be suffered to preach among us as such, without the approbation of that meeting. Or, if in any circuit, a regular local preachers' meeting cannot be held, they shall be proposed and approved at the general quarterly meeting of the circuit. 1794.

2. All local preachers shall meet in class. No exception shall be made in respect to any who have been travelling preachers in former years. 1793.

3. Let no local preacher, who will not meet in class, or who is not regularly planned by the superintendent of the circuit where he resides, be permitted to preach.

4. Let no local preacher be permitted to preach in any other circuit than his own, without producing a recommendation from the superintendent of that circuit in which he lives; nor suffer any invitation to be admitted as a plea, except from men in office, who act in conjunction with the superintendent of that circuit which he visits. N. B. The design of this rule is to prevent any, under

Concerning Trustees.

the character of local preachers, from burthening the people, either by collecting money, or living upon them; and to prevent improper persons, who bear no part of the expence, from inviting local preachers thus to visit them. But it was never intended to reflect the least disrespect or any of our worthy brethren, the local preachers, whom, as a body, we greatly respect.

5. Let no local preacher keep love-feasts, without the consent of the superintendent, nor in any wise interfere with his business. Let every one keep in his own place, and attend to the duties of his station.

6. No preacher who has been suspended, or expelled, shall, on any account, be employed as a local preacher, without the authority of conference.

III. *Concerning Trustees.*

1. The trustees, in conjunction with the superintendent, who shall have one vote only, shall choose their own stewards; who shall receive and disburse all seat-rents, and such collections as shall be made for the purpose of paying interest of money due upon the premises, or for reducing the principal. The aforesaid steward shall keep proper accounts in books provided for that purpose; which books shall be open for the inspection of the superintendent, and audited in his presence once every year; or oftener, if convenient.

2. No trustee, (however accused, or defective in conformity to the established rules of the society,) shall be removed from the society; unless his crime, or breach of the rules of the society, be proved, in the presence of the trustees and leaders. 1794.

Quarterly Meetings.

IV. Of the Quarterly Meetings, composed of the Stewards of the different Societies in each Circuit.

1. All bills for the support of travelling preachers, and their families; for house-rent, fire, candles, sickness, travelling expences, and all other matters, for which the circuits cannot provide, shall first meet with the approbation of the quarterly meetings, and be signed by the general steward of the circuit, before they can be brought to the district committee.

2. No Circuits shall be divided, till such division has been approved by the respective quarterly meetings, and signed by the general steward.

3. Before any superintendent propose a preacher to the conference as proper to be admitted on trial, such preacher must be approved of at the quarterly meeting. 1797.

The rule respecting *giving or taking things on usury*, i. e. unlawful interest, was made against giving or taking things in pawn; and that was before pawnbroking was legalized by act of parliament. I have never known any person called to account for this in thirty years. What is here said about *spirituous liquors*, I heard Mr. Wesley explain at the last conference before his death. When asking the preachers, who were going to be received into full connexion, ‘Do you drink any drams?’ he said; ‘I mean spirits alone, or unmixed with water. A little spirit and water you may sometimes have occasion for. Only here it will be needful to take great care.’ Dr. Fothergill himself said, he had made many drunkards; having advised persons in certain complaints to drink a little spirit and water. But what they used at first as medicine, they continued to use from contracted taste and habit.

It may be proper to insert also,

Rules of the Band Societies.

THE RULES OF THE BAND SOCIETIES,

Drawn up December 25, 1738.

The design of our meeting, is to obey that command of God, *Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed.*

To this end, we intend,

1. To meet once a week, at the least.
2. To come punctually at the hour appointed, without some extraordinary reason.
3. To begin (those of us who are present) exactly at the hour, with singing or prayer.
4. To speak each of us in order, freely and plainly, the true state of our souls, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and temptations we have felt since our last meeting.
5. To end every meeting with prayer, suited to the state of each person present.
6. To desire some person among us to speak his own state first, and then to ask the rest in order, as many and as searching questions as may be, concerning their state, sins, and temptations.

Some of the questions proposed to every one before he is admitted among us, may be to this effect.

1. Have you the forgiveness of your sins?
2. Have you peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ?
3. Have you the witness of God's Spirit with your spirit, that you are a child of God?
4. Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart?
5. Has no sin, inward or outward, dominion over you?
6. Do you desire to be told of your faults?

Directions to the Band Societies.

7. Do you desire to be told of all your faults ? and that plain and home ?

8. Do you desire, that every one of us should tell you, from time to time, whatsoever is in his heart concerning you ?

9. Consider ! Do you desire, we should tell you whatsoever we think, whatsoever we fear, whatsoever we hear, concerning you ?

10. Do you desire, that in doing this, we should come as close as possible, that we should cut to the quick, and search your heart to the bottom ?

11. Is it your desire and design, to be on this and all other occasions, entirely open, so as to speak every thing that is in your heart without exception, without disguise, and without reserve.

Any of the preceding questions may be asked as often as occasion offers : the four following at every meeting :

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting ?

2. What temptations have you met with ?

3. How was you delivered ?

4. What have you thought, said or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not ?

Directions given to the Band Societies, December 25, 1744.

You are supposed to have the *faith that overcometh the world*. To you, therefore, it is not grievous,

I. Carefully to abstain from doing evil : in particular,

1. Neither to *buy or sell* any thing at all on the Lord's day.

2. To taste no spirituous liquor, *no dram* of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician.

3. To be *at a word* both in buying and selling.

4. To *pawn nothing*, no not to save life.*

*There was a fund at that time established to assist the poor, either by loan, or by donation, which accounts for the rigour of the rule.

General Mode of Public Worship.

5. Not to *mention the fault* of any *behind his back*, and to stop those short that do.

6. To wear no *needless ornaments*, such as rings, earrings, necklaces, lace, ruffles.

7. To use no *needless self-indulgence*, such as taking snuff or tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician.

II. Zealously to maintain good works : in particular,

1. To *give alms* of such things as you possess, and that to the uttermost of your power.

2. To *reprove* all that sin in your sight, and that in love, and meekness of wisdom.

3. To be patterns of *diligence* and *frugality*, of *self-denial*, and taking up the cross daily.

III. Constantly to attend on all the ordinances of God : in particular,

1. To be at church, and at the Lord's table every week. and at every public meeting of the bands.

2. To attend the ministry of the word every morning, unless distance, business, or sickness prevent.

3. To use private prayer every day : and family prayer, if you are the head of a family.

4. To read the scriptures, and meditate therein, at every vacant hour. And,

5. To observe, as days of fasting or abstinence, all *Fridays* in the year.

Before we enter into the minutia of the Discipline of the Methodists, it may be proper to describe their

General Mode of Public Worship.

The service commences with singing, in which the congregation join. After this the preacher offers up an extemporary prayer. He then generally gives out a few more verses of a hymn, after which he takes his text, and

General Mode of Public Worship.

begins his sermon. The Methodists preach, as well as pray, extempore. In some places, however, they read the Common Prayer of the Church of England, either the whole service, or Mr. Wesley's abridgment of it; or omit the Litany, &c. And where they do neither, on the Sunday forenoon, they read either one or both of the lessons appointed by the calendar. But when the preachers read the Common Prayer, they add extemporary prayer. They seldom pray long. Mr. Wesley advised them not to pray more than five, or eight minutes at one time; he likewise cautioned them against long singing, as well as long and loud preaching. In these respects he was himself a pattern, seldom detaining the congregation more than an hour. In general, they do not deliver long discourses; nor do they wrap up their sermons in a mumbling whisper, in about twelve or fifteen minutes. They see no need of running into one extreme to avoid the opposite one.

On Sunday evenings, when the congregations are large, their sermons are frequently longer than usual. But in general they do not preach more than forty, or fifty minutes. And although they do not read their sermons, nothing rhapsodical or incoherent is approved. Few of them ever write their sermons, yet they premeditate, and study the order and substance of their discourses; and preaching so frequently renders the exercise comparatively easy. However, this does not prevent the preacher, from recollecting that divine assistance is essentially necessary, both in preparing for the pulpit, and in preaching. 'We are not sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God,' 2 Cor. iii. 5. Much less can we speak publicly, to edification unless the Lord assist us, and accompany the word by the Holy Ghost, and thus make it the savour 'of life unto life.'

General Mode of Public Worship.

Mr. Wesley advised his preachers to preach Christ, and that in some measure, in every sermon; to preach him in all his offices; to declare the law as well as the gospel, both to believers and unbelievers; and strongly to insist upon the necessity of inward and outward holiness. He advised them to set forth Christ as evidently crucified before their eyes; Christ in all the riches of his grace, justifying us by his blood, and sanctifying us by his Spirit. He advised them always to suit their subject to the state of their audience; to choose the plainest texts; to take care not to ramble from their text, and to make out what they took in hand; to be sparing in allegorizing or spiritualizing; to beware of any thing awkward or affected in their gesture, phraseology, or pronunciation; and to let their whole deportment before the congregation be serious and solemn.

After the sermon is ended, another hymn is sung, and the service concludes with a short extemporary prayer, and the usual benediction contained in 2 Cor. xiii. 14. And though this form of worship be plain and simple, yet it is solemn and edifying.

Singing makes a more considerable part of the worship of the Methodists than perhaps of that of any other denomination of Christians; hardly any exercise, so powerfully affects and raises the soul to heavenly things, as that of singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

The hymns used, by the Methodists not only breathe a spirit of piety, but are beautifully poetic. Most of them were written by Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, but the far larger number by the latter. As a composer of sacred poetry, the world has seldom produced an equal to him. The merits of Dr. Watts, as a poetic writer are universally acknowledged, and none will deny, I presume, that he was a competent judge of poetry. But the Doctor was so charmed with the poetry of Mr. Charles

Wesley, that he did not scruple to assert, that a single poem of his, entitled, "Wrestling Jacob," which may be found in page 137, of our large hymn book, was worth all the poems which himself had ever written.

The hymns of the Methodists, are adapted to the various states and exercises of the mind of pious persons, and to all the different circumstances of life. Our large hymn book, contains a body of experimental and practical divinity, and is variously calculated to assist and quicken men to walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. Together with the charms of poetry, the hymns display the purity, strength, and elegance of the English language; and what is of the greatest moment, is the spirit of piety, which the reader will find breathing through the whole collection.

It has been objected to the worship of the Methodists, that on some occasions, sundry persons have been much affected; and have cried out in prayer or praise; in short, that there has been considerable noise in the place of assembly. In answer to this objection, I would make a few remarks. I believe, there are now extraordinary outpourings of the Spirit of God, and on these occasions, some persons may not be able to restrain themselves: besides, there may be occasions, when it may be advantageously allowed for a season. However, it is seldom that disorder can lay claim to a scriptural licence. On the other hand, I will not advocate the cause of dead formality in religion, nor attempt to justify those who lay too much stress on undeviating order and cold uniformity. Of the two extremes, the latter is the worse.

When in the ordinary affairs of life, we are oppressed with grief, or elated with joy, our words, our gesture, and our countenance, proclaim the state of our minds. And we need not wonder, that a man just enlightened to see, and awakened to feel, that he is a guilty, condemned and

Times of Service various.

helpless sinner, should be in consequence overwhelmed with an horrible dread, and like the publican, smite upon his breast, and cry, *God be merciful to me a sinner*; or, that feeling the arrows of the Almighty stick fast in his flesh, and the poison thereof drink up his spirits, he should implore mercy with strong cries and tears. When the Lord inclines his ear unto him, and hears his cry; when he brings him up out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, sets his feet upon a rock, and orders his goings: when a new song is put into his mouth, of praise and thanksgiving; is it surprising, that he should cry out and shout, ‘My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour?’ or, that he should call upon his soul, and all that is therein, to bless that merciful and gracious Lord, who has forgiven all his sins, lifted upon him the light of his countenance, filled him with peace and joy in believing, and given him a good hope through grace, of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for him? Such a person could scarcely be accused of disorder, or improper conduct, should he say to those around, ‘Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul:’ for he hath brought me out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto himself, so that I have received forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who are sanctified, by faith that is in Christ Jesus. But in general, the Methodist congregations are as orderly as any others.

Before I quit the subject of our public worship, I would mention a few other circumstances.

There is nothing in which the Methodists manifest so little uniformity as in the hours of their service, especially on Sundays. In some of their chapels, the preaching is at seven in the morning, and six in the evening; in some at nine in the morning, half past one, and six; and in

In what cases Service is allowed in Church hours.

others at half past ten, at two, and at six. And in some few instances, there are still other variations: this is regulated by circumstances, and those times are fixed upon, which are judged to be the best. Methodism becomes all things lawful to all men, in order the more effectually to promote their salvation. As far as circumstances would admit, Mr. Wesley and his followers, have laboured to maintain a strict union with the church of England. But as they had no other bond of union than that of piety, some joined them who had been brought up dissenters; and in consequence of this, the ministers to whose congregations they had formerly belonged, refused to let them partake of the Lord's supper with them, and also to baptize their children. Some ministers of the established church behaved in a similar way; others of these were so miserably deficient in point of religion, that many of them could not in conscience receive the sacrament at their hands. There were others, whose preaching was so contrary to the articles, and homilies of the church, or so full of bitter railing against the Methodists, that many could not think it to be their duty to attend their ministry.

In some places also, our chapels were at a great distance from any church; and in others the churches were too small. In consequence of these circumstances, our service was allowed in church hours, in various places. This was strongly opposed by some of the preachers, and by many of the people. But where a large majority was in favour of it, and no division of the society was likely to take place, the conference found themselves under the necessity of conceding the point. Where a majority of the trustees, the stewards, and leaders, signify to the conference their desire to have service in those hours, their desire is complied with.

The case is the same respecting the Lord's supper, the

Form of administering the Lord's Supper, &c.

baptizing of children by our preachers, and burying the dead in burial grounds belonging to our chapels; where the majority of the trustees, stewards, and leaders, are against these, nothing of the kind takes place.

Meantime, the preachers are neither to do nor say any thing to influence the people either the one way or the other. And no preacher is *required* to read the Common Prayer, or to baptize, or to administer the Lord's supper, or bury the dead, contrary to his own judgment. As to the people, where we have these privileges, some join their brethren in them, and some do not, but go to the church, receive the sacrament, have their children baptized, and bury their dead there. To this we make no objections, but let every man do as he is persuaded in his own mind. The Methodists believe, that they were not raised up to do good to any one denomination of people only, but to rush through every opening door, to spread scriptural holiness over the land, and in some measure over the world; till names, and sects, and parties fall, and all Christians be one fold under one shepherd.

In administering the Lord's supper, baptizing of children, and burying the dead, we adhere to the form of the church of England: though some of the preachers deviate from it a little; no strict uniformity is insisted upon; but every one is allowed to use his own judgment. In giving the Lord's supper, we sing suitable verses of hymns, and pray extempore. And in burying the dead, the officiating preacher frequently delivers a short appropriate discourse to those who are present.

Prayer Meetings—Meeting of the Penitents.

Prayer Meetings

Are in much esteem, and well attended by the Methodists, especially on Sunday evenings. These are usually held in private houses, both in cities, towns, and villages in the country; they generally continue about an hour, and are very useful to many persons, who from want of decent clothes, or unavoidable confinement, do not attend any place of worship during the day. Religious impressions have been made upon many minds at these meetings. They are very useful also, in affording young men, of piety and promising abilities, an opportunity of exercising their gifts in prayer and exhortation. Three or four persons exercise at a prayer meeting, each giving out a hymn, and then offering up an extemporary prayer.

There is a special description of meetings for prayer, termed *Intercession*: these are held on Fridays, at twelve o'clock, in some of the oldest societies. But they became more general a few years ago, when the conference recommended, that a prayer meeting should be held every Friday, to intercede for our nation, then involved in war, and various other distresses. But in manufacturing places, the forenoon was inconvenient, and the meeting was appointed for the evening; these meetings are still held weekly. And in these little assemblies, many fervent, and I trust, effectual prayers, are put up for our king and country; for all descriptions of people in the nation, and for all the world.

In some of the societies, on Saturday evenings, there is held what is called,

The Meeting of the Penitents.

This was instituted of the special purpose for addressing

Admission into the Society.—Class Meeting.

those who were convinced of sin, sorry for their transgressions, and mournfully seeking mercy. Frequently, however the officiating preacher speaks a seasonable word to others also. Singing and prayer constitute part of the exercises at these meetings.

Admission into the Society.

In general, none are admitted into society, even upon trial, except recommended by some person acquainted with them, and after meeting once or more in class. The superintendent has power to admit *on trial*, persons recommended by a leader with whom they have met, and to give notes of permission to love-feasts, without such recommendation if he think proper. Yet in all doubtful cases, prudence directs him to consult such as are most likely to furnish him with the necessary information. Every person admitted into the society, is not only to conform to the rules before inserted ; but is required to meet in the class to which he or she belongs, at every opportunity.

Class Meeting.

A class meeting opens by singing a few verses of a hymn, and the leader making a short prayer. He says a few words on the subject of his own Christian experience; and then speaks to each member of the class in the order in which their names stand in the paper, generally asking a few pertinent questions respecting their religious affections and practice, while he gives to each such instructions, cautions, reproofs, or encouragements, as the case seems to require.

Appointment and Office of Class Leaders.

FORM OF THE CLASS PAPER.

MONTH.	JUNE.				JULY.			
Day . .	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22
Thomas Cooper	d.							
Elizabeth Cooper	s.							
William Unwin	b.							
Mary Unwin	n.							
Joseph Townley	a.							
John Short	p.							
Samuel Tate	p.							
Henry Elliot	p.							

These meetings are of the highest advantage to those who attend them. They afford opportunities for teaching religious truths, for quickening languishing piety, stirring up persons who are grown weary and faint in their minds, for encouraging feeble and disconsolate spirits, as well as promoting Christian union. The meeting closes with another hymn and prayer, and praise adapted to the states of the people.

The Appointment and office of Class Leaders.

In forming a new society, consisting of only one class, it is the province of the superintendent of the circuit to appoint the leader. But he fixes upon one, according to the best of his judgment, who will be most suitable for

Appointment and Office of Class Leaders.

the office, as well as agreeable to the people who now join. Nearly the same may be said respecting the appointment of a new leader to any society consisting of one class only. But where there are several classes belonging to the same society, it is done according to the rule.

The office of a leader consists in meeting his class as above; in visiting those who absent themselves from the class, and the sick members belonging to it; in receiving the weekly contributions before-mentioned, in attending the leaders' meetings, and at those meetings, paying the class money into the hands of the stewards of the society; giving his vote upon any proposal for the exclusion or admission of a member of society, or the appointment of new stewards for that society; to which we must add, that he must shew his class paper to the officiating preacher, and answer questions put to him respecting any who neglect to meet in his class, or any whose characters are rendered doubtful, or may be the subjects of inquiry.

A person appointed to be a leader of a class, is supposed to be not only moral but truly pious; of sound judgment, zealous for the salvation of souls, of good report, and apt to teach, according to the nature and design of class meetings. And he should state to his class the propriety of contributing to the support of the cause of God, according to our rules, see 1 Cor. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.—He is particularly requested to see that each member in his class has the rules of the society, in order that no one may be ignorant of them, and to read and enforce them in his class *once* in every quarter. He is desired to regulate his class paper in the following manner. If any member of his class be absent at the weekly meeting, he is requested to inquire into the cause, and if the person be distant from home, to place opposite

Stewards and Leaders Meetings.

his name a D ; if sick, an S ; if business has prevented, a B ; if there be reason to conclude it has been neglect, N ; and if no reason can be assigned at the time, an A. He is also requested to write the names of those persons who are on trial on the back of his class paper, where they are to remain till the next quarterly visitation ; when those who are *then* approved of may be received as members of the society. No leader is to receive a member from another class without the consent of the preacher and his former leader, nor put any member out of his own class himself.

Stewards, and Leaders' Meetings.

A steward of the *society* and a *circuit* steward are two distinct offices, and are but seldom in the same hands. But there is no rule against a man's filling both offices at the same time.

The office of a *steward* of the *society*, is to attend the leaders' meeting, and there to receive from each leader, what class money he has in hand, to pay the officiating preachers their weekly board, and any other just and commonly allowed demand. At these meetings, the stewards are not only the treasurers, but the secretaries also. They are required to keep regular and just accounts of all monies received by them, and to shew their accounts to the superintendent when required. It is the business of the stewards to make the necessary preparations for holding the quarterly meetings and love-feasts, and to take care that none get into the love-feasts, but those who are members of society, or who have notes of admittance from the preachers. Lastly, where the district meeting, or the conference is held, it is the business of the stewards to make the necessary preparations, and to pay all expenses incurred by such assemblies,

Quarterly Meetings.

which have not been discharged by the preachers so assembling.

The office of a *circuit* steward is to receive and pay all monies at the quarterly meetings, and to keep a fair account of the whole; to assist in regulating the income and expenditure; to lend what money may be wanted, which should be refunded to him in the course of the ensuing quarter, to pay all proper and allowed demands, together with the travelling expenses to and from the district meetings and conferences; as also to advance a reasonable sum to take the preachers and their families to their new appointment. But it frequently happens, the finances of the circuit are so low, that the stewards cannot advance money for these removals; and in such cases, the deficiencies, as far as judged reasonable and the funds will allow, are paid at the next conference. But sometimes, when a preacher is able, he makes no claim, but bears the loss.

Quarterly Meetings.

A quarterly meeting is composed of the travelling preachers stationed in the circuit where such meeting is held, the stewards of such circuit, the stewards of the different societies in the circuit, and sometimes other particular friends, members of society, who may be invited, or who may wish to attend, are present. There is generally a plain dinner, and in most places, those who dine pay a shilling, except the preachers, or some poor brother.

The business of the quarterly meeting is, to read over the receipts and disbursements of each society for the last quarter, and sign the accounts; to receive the quarterly income from the stewards of the different societies in the circuit, and to pay the preachers the quarterly

Quarterly Meetings.

allowances for clothes, &c. And also the usual allowances to a married preacher for his wife, his children, and servant. At this meeting also, there are frequently demands for sundry other things. And it is not unusual at these meetings to take into consideration any proposed improvements in the circuit; sometimes the propriety of dividing the circuit, having an additional preacher, or the case of any local preacher in that circuit, who may be proposed as a suitable person to become an itinerant preacher,

The quarterly meeting is also the proper time and place, for changing or re-appointing the circuit stewards. It is the sole and exclusive business of the superintendent to name who he thinks would be proper to fill the office. But if the person so nominated be objected to, by the majority of the meeting, he must name another, and should they object again, he must nominate another, till he shall fix upon one whom the majority of the persons present agree to appoint. And it is agreeable to a rule of the conference, that no steward of a circuit, or of a society, shall continue such more than one year, except re-appointed to the office. And it is recommended, that, as far as practicable, one of the two stewards shall be changed each year at Christmas.

The money received and paid by the circuit stewards at the quarterly meetings, is raised by the contributions of the different societies at the quarterly renewal of the tickets. There is not only a weekly contribution, but a quarterly contribution also in all the circuits. For distinction sake, the former is often called *class money*, and the latter *ticket money*; not that the tickets are sold, but because it is the rule to contribute one shilling or more, at the time of receiving the quarterly tickets. The original average contribution was, that each member, taking rich and poor together, should contribute as many pence

Local Preachers.

weekly, and as many *shillings quarterly*, as they were in number. And this, when money was more than twice the value it is now; yet many societies do not come up to this; some few, however, do more. Had the original average contribution been raised in every circuit, those difficulties, and embarrassments, the conference has had so often to contend with, had never existed, nor would so many preachers have had to groan under pinching poverty.

Of late years, many quarterly meetings have taken to themselves the authority of discussing the question of what preachers would be proper for their circuit the next year, and who the conference should be requested to send to their circuit. We have, indeed, no positive rule, either for or against this practice: only the preachers are positively required by the conference, not to go out of the quarterly meeting during any of its discussions.* And the conference has equally determined, that no letter shall have any attention paid to it, except it come from the quarterly meeting.

The Local Preachers

Are a very valuable and useful part of the Methodist societies. Many of them labour much; and few of them ever receive any reward in this world. After being employed six days in their own business, they deny themselves the rest of the sabbath, and travel a number of miles, preach once or more, and often return home tired and weary. Generally they get a little bodily refreshment, at the expense of the people to whom they preach, and in some cases the hire of the horse which they ride. Yet unenviable as the office is, we do not allow any man to act as a local preacher among us, except he be a member of the society, a man of good sense, who

* See Minutes of 1806

Travelling Preachers.

has a competent knowledge of the scriptures in general, and the doctrines of the gospel in particular; unless he be able to speak in public with tolerable ease and readiness; and after due examination, be approved of by the local and travelling preachers in the circuit where he resides. It would be an easy, and not an unpleasant task, to mention many local preachers of great abilities, whose labours would do honour to any community.

A meeting of the local preachers is held in most circuits, once in the quarter. The superintendent preacher meets with them. After singing and prayer, inquiry is made respecting the moral character of each; and also if there be any complaints against any of them for preaching unsound doctrines, neglecting to fulfil their appointments, &c.

At these meetings is determined what new places shall be taken into the local preacher's plan, what old places shall be given up, who shall be admitted as local preachers, and who shall be discontinued. The local preachers are regularly planned by the superintendents of the respective circuits. The plan is usually made for six months, and in many circuits is printed and circulated among the people. This description of men have done, and still do, much good: and it is to be hoped no impolitic minister under any persecuting influence, will ever attempt to make any restrictive laws against them.

Travelling Preachers.

From among the local preachers are selected those who are appointed to circuits as itinerants. These cannot *always* be chosen with mere reference to their preaching abilities: for some of the local preachers are not willing to travel; and some of them cannot. The limited state of the connexion in respect to pecuniary supplies, obliges

Travelling Preachers.

the conference to prefer those who are single, and those who are young. But still the greatest care is taken that no improper person be sent to travel. It will be asked what are the general qualifications required in a travelling preacher among the Methodists? To this I answer,

1. Except in some very rare cases, when a minister of the established church, or a dissenting minister, may join us, every one admitted to be a travelling preacher, has been some time, a member of our society. But as we neither profess to be omniscient nor infallible, there is a possibility that the conference may be imposed upon. However, I am convinced this does but seldom happen; and when it does, the man is soon unmasked, and discarded. And sometimes even before sufficient time has been allowed for this, he finds the office and employments he has got into, so disagreeable to flesh and blood, that he forms an excuse, and retires from the work. In other cases, valuable men of delicate constitutions are unable to bear the severity of our labour.

2. It is required that they have a clear sound understanding. And many of uncommon natural powers, have been, and still are among the itinerant preachers. Indeed, it may readily be allowed, that to speak extempore, upon such subjects, and before such congregations, must require as large a portion of natural endowments, as fall to the general share of men.

3. The Methodists being raised up for a revival of religion, It is not a pre-requisite for admission as a preacher among us, that a man be what is termed a *scholar*. Yet the Methodists neither despise nor neglect learning. Some of the preachers had much learning, and some had a little, when they became itinerants; and many of them have greatly improved in learning since that time. Yet they can see nothing, either in the scripture, or in the nature of the employment, that demands that *all* preach-

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ers should be learned men. To have *a few* profound scholars may be very convenient and useful on many accounts. But, as much may be learnt and taught in our mother tongue, as any people need to know, to make them wise unto salvation; though the Methodists do not require that a preacher should understand Latin and Greek, they do require what is infinitely more important, namely, that he should understand the things of God, and that clearly, having a just conception of the analogy of faith, and of the whole plan of salvation. And it is enjoined by rule, that every preacher shall give attendance to *reading* and to *meditation*. They are required,

4. To have a ready utterance. For let a man know whatever he may, his knowledge cannot profit others, any further than he is able to communicate it by words. But,

5. Before we admit a person as a travelling preacher, we inquire 'whether he has had any fruit of his labours, during the time he has been a local preacher?' 'Whether any sinners have been reformed by his labours?' 'Have any of the children of God been edified and built up by his preaching?' 'Are his talents of that description as may make him generally useful?'

6. Our rules will not admit of preachers being sent out. (1.) Till they have been proposed at, and approved by, a majority of the quarterly-meeting in the circuit in which they respectively reside.

(2.) The like proposal must be made, and the same sanction obtained at the annual meeting of the district in which their circuit is. Nay more, they must attend the district meeting, and undergo an examination respecting their religious experience, knowledge, motives, sentiments, and their willingness to conform to the rules of our discipline.

(3.) And when at the conference, as is sometimes the

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case, we have not a sufficient number of persons who have gone through this process, and are obliged to select from among the other local preachers, and put them down for circuits, it is done only provisionally; and subject to a similar process. Though they should be put down for circuits, and their names be printed in the copy of the stations, still they must not go to their circuits till the quarterly meeting has concurred as above-mentioned, and till three superintendent preachers, or three preachers, each of whom shall not have travelled less than ten years, shall have examined them, as others are examined at the district meetings.

(4.) After this, they are employed four years upon trial, before we receive them into full connection, and admit them to all the privileges of the body. And should any serious doubts arise, at the expiration of these four years, respecting their piety, abilities, or probable usefulness, they will either be dismissed, or have the time of their probation prolonged.

(5.) During the time of their probation they are not allowed to marry: and should they do so, they must not expect the conference to employ them any more. But the conference can dispense with the rule, and allow a person, upon some extraordinary occasion, to marry before the end of the four years. This has been done in a few cases, and but a few.

(6.) If a preacher should become superannuated before the term of his probation be ended, he is not entitled to any annual allowance from the preachers' fund.

The following twelve rules belong to all the preachers, but are particularly denominated, '*The twelve rules of a helper*;' that is, a preacher who does not fill the office of a superintendent.

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time:

neither spend any more time at any one place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be Holiness to the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

3. Converse sparingly and cautiously with women; particularly with young women.

4. Take no step towards marriage without first consulting with some of your brethren.

5. Believe evil of no one; unless you see it done; take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction upon every thing: you know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

6. Speak evil of no one: else your word especially would eat as doth a canker: keep your thoughts within your own breast, till you come to the person concerned.

7. Tell every one what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, and as soon as may be: else it will fester in your heart.

8. Do not affect the gentleman. You have no more to do with this character, than with that of a dancing-master. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood (if time permit), or drawing water: not of cleaning your own shoes, or your neighbour's.

10. Be punctual. Do every thing exactly at the time: and in general, do, not *mend* our rules, but *keep* them: not for wrath, but for conscience-sake.

11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most. Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this and that society: but to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without

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which they cannot see the Lord. And remember! a Methodist preacher is to mind *every* point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline. Therefore you will need all the sense you have, and to have all your wits about you.

12. Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such it is your duty to employ your time in the manner which we direct: partly in preaching and visiting from house to house: partly in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful that you should do that *part* of the work which we advise, and at those *times* and *places* which we judge most for his glory.

Respecting these golden rules it may be proper to observe, 'affecting the gentleman,' was not designed to countenance clownishness, or any thing contrary to true Christian courtesy. And when it is said 'a preacher of the gospel is the servant of all,' it certainly was not meant to insinuate, that a preacher was to be set to do the lowest and most slavish drudgery which any person could find for him to do. I presume the servant of God is '*the servant of all*' in gospel labours, and in nothing else. And though he may not be ashamed of 'cleaning his own shoes, or the shoes of others,' yet, I apprehend, they ought to be 'ashamed' who would expect or suffer him so to do, especially such as are instructed and profited by his ministerial labours. And surely they ought to feel some shame also, who would suffer the preacher to go from place to place, day after day, with his shoes and boots uncleaned.

And as to what is said in the twelfth rule about doing *that part* of the work, and at *the times* and *places* advised, it is needful to observe, this rule was made in Mr. Wesley's time, and early in Methodism. Mr. Wesley

Office of a Superintendent.

superintended the whole connection. The preacher in each circuit, to whose care the circuit was committed, was called *the assistant*, because he *assisted* Mr. Wesley in the government of the societies and the preachers. And the other preachers were called *helpers*, because they *helped* the assistants in the general work, though still under his care and direction.—What the spirit of the rule now requires, is, That each superintendent, or the preacher who has the chief care of a circuit, and whose name stands the first in the printed minutes, shall act in subordination to the rules and orders of the conference; and that the other preacher or preachers in the circuit shall act in conformity to his directions, in all their labours so long as he requires nothing contrary to the rules of the conference. And this is a matter of great importance. Opposition to the superintendent, and forming a party against him, might be productive of very great evils. And for a superintendent to *lord it over* his brethren, capriciously to exercise his delegated authority, or to assume more authority than the conference had conferred upon him, or the bible would warrant, would also be a very injurious and improper thing.

The Office of a Superintendent.

It is ‘To see that the other preachers in the circuit behave well, and want nothing.’ In other words, he is to watch over the conduct and characters of his helpers, both as Christians, and as itinerant Methodist preachers. And he is to use his best endeavours, that all their reasonable wants be supplied, and also the wants of their families, if they have families. It is also the office of the superintendent to make and alter the plan of the circuit, and that both for the local and travelling preachers. And it is chiefly by acting according to *such* plan, that

Office of a Superintendent.

they do that *part* of the work, and at the *times* and *places* required, in literal conformity to the twelfth rule. It is also the province of the superintendent to fix the order of renewing the society tickets, and to give them all himself, if he be so inclined. But this he seldom does: and in many places it would be very inconvenient and difficult, if not altogether impracticable. The other preachers therefore, take a share: and this has now been sanctioned by long and general custom. It is his business to propose persons for admission into, and exclusion from the society; to propose persons to be admitted as local preachers; to propose new society and circuit stewards; to propose at the quarterly meeting and district meeting, persons to be taken out as travelling preachers. It is his office to fix the time of the love-feasts, and watch-nights; to require the society and circuit stewards to shew him how their accounts stand, at least once every year; to send to our book-steward for such books as are wanted in his circuit, and to account for them. Also to fix the time, and arrange the methods, with his helpers, for making all the usual collections; viz. that for Kingswood school, the yearly collection, that for the missions, and that for the preachers' fund. And to account for the money raised by each collection. And if any chapel in his circuit is to be collected for in any other circuit or circuits, it is his business to go and make such collection, or prevail upon his helper or helpers to supply his lack of service. It is his business also, upon divers occasions, to meet the trustees of the different chapels, and sometimes to examine their accounts. Also to give certificates, or testimonials, to persons removing into other circuits. To regulate the bands, and also the meeting of what is called *the body bands*, and also the *select band*. He is to take a list of all the societies in his circuit at the end of each year, and to leave his suc-

General Office of a Preacher.—Giving of Tickets.

cessor a regular account thereof. To fix the time of the quarterly meetings, and to preside at those meetings. The most important and necessary qualifications for a superintendent, are, That he walk closely with God, and have his work greatly at heart; that he understand and love the Methodist discipline. To these we may add, a thorough knowledge of the history and the doctrines of Methodism, and great self-command, will be of great advantage to him in his office. Lastly, he should unite in himself great firmness, a great prudence, a peaceable disposition, and genuine piety.

The general Office of a Preacher,

Is, 1. To preach twice or three times every sabbath-day, and once or twice on each of the week-days. During the Summer he mostly preaches once a week at five o'clock in the morning. In addition to this he has to travel from place to place in his circuit, sometimes riding and sometimes walking.

2. After he has done preaching in the evening, he frequently meets the society, and delivers such advice as he thinks proper, respecting moral conduct, growth in grace, and peculiar exigencies.

Giving of the Tickets.

In December, March, June, and September, the tickets are renewed. And in the large circuits, especially, this greatly adds to the preacher's labour, yet it is a work of importance and general advantage of the societies. The tickets are printed at our own press in London, with a text of scripture upon them, which is varied each quarter, and a letter of the alphabet, going regularly through, and then beginning again. Two out of every ten have a small

Form of the Tickets.

b upon them in addition to the other letter; these are designed to be given to such as meet in band. And are in the following form:

BAND TICKET.

March, 1815.

Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, &c.
Ezek. xxxvi. 31.

S b

Thos. Unwin.

CLASS TICKET.

March, 1815.

Turn ye at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my SPIRIT unto you, I will make known my words unto you.
Prov. i. 23.

S

Jos. Cooper.

The tickets are the same each quarter, all over the connection. At the time of giving the tickets, the preacher sees by the usual marks, whether the members have met well or ill; and if they have not met well, he inquires into the cause. He speaks to each person respecting his or her religious experience, much in the way that a leader speaks to each member in his class. He blots out the names of any who have left the society, or any who have been judged unfit to be continued members; and also sets down the names of new members.

In some places the preacher has to meet the bands, after he has done preaching. A band seldom consists of more than three or four persons. These persons are supposed to be nearly in the same state of grace, or in other words, their attainments in religion are supposed to be nearly equal. And the bands do not consist of

Love-Feasts.

men and women together, as in many of the classes, but men only, and women only, are in the bands.

Now the meeting called "*the bands*," or "*the body band*," consists of as many persons as belong to any or all the bands in that society. Besides a little time spent in singing and prayer, the rest of the time is employed in speaking their religious experience. At these meetings the people are not spoken to, one by one, as at a class meeting, but every one speaks, or remains silent, as disposed. The officiating preacher presides at the meeting of the bands.

Love-Feasts.

In the principal societies, there is a love-feast every quarter. In many smaller places it is not more than twice, or perhaps only once a year; and in many little places not at all. To get admission into a love-feast, the different persons must shew the last ticket they received to the person or persons standing at the door, and the ticket must not have been received above three months before. Without this, the door-keepers are not to admit any person. Only, should they have lost or forgotten their tickets, the preacher, upon being applied to, may give them a note of admittance, which they deliver up to the door-keeper.

The preachers also frequently give notes of admittance to some persons who are not members of society, but who may come recommended by a leader, or some other well known and respectable member. We have a positive rule, that no person, not a member of the society, shall be admitted more than once to a love-feast.

Love-feasts were of apostolic institution, and they are still preserved by the St. Thomas's Christians in India. The late Dr. Buchanan had an opportunity of being

Watch-Nights.

present at one of these meetings, which was held in the church yard. These festivals are mentioned in the 12th verse of the epistle of Jude, where the apostle is understood to say of certain gnostics, "These are spots in your feasts of love," or love-feasts. Some think that the true reading of 2 Pet. ii. 13. is, "Sporting themselves in their love-feasts." In modern times, the Moravians and Methodists are the only Christians, at least in this part of the globe, who hold love-feasts. Among the Moravians, the general refreshment made use of by them, at love-feasts, is tea. And upon these occasions they read the accounts of the success of their missions in the different parts of the world. The Methodists, at these meetings, take only bread and water. The love-feast is both begun and ended by singing and prayer; a travelling preacher presiding. The time is chiefly taken up in relating Christian experience. Any person may speak who chooses. They are generally very agreeable, edifying, and refreshing seasons. They tend to promote piety, mutual affection, and zeal. A collection is made, the first object of which is, to pay for the bread used on the occasion; and the surplus is divided among the poor members of the society where the love-feast is held.

Watch-Nights.

It may be proper to give some account of a watch-night. When these are kept according to their original design, and the practice of Mr. Wesley, they do not conclude till midnight. In many places, however, they have of late begun and concluded earlier. A watch-night, that is held till midnight, usually begins about half past eight o'clock. The service consists of a short suitable sermon, and then the rest of the time is occupied in alternate singing and prayer. For this service we have an appro-

priate set of hymns. However, it is common, in addition to the sermon at the beginning, for some other preacher, or preachers, to give a word of exhortation at intervals. These seasons are generally very solemn and impressive.

Circuits, Districts, and District-Meetings.

A *circuit* consists of a number of places, at each of which there is a society. These circuits are sometimes smaller and sometimes larger, in some cases having two, in some three or four, and in some very rare cases, five preachers. In these circuits, the preachers go round according to a fixed plan. In some part of the circuit, where there is the largest society, reside the families of the married preachers. This is termed the head place in the circuit. The whole circuit generally goes by the name of this place. For in naming the circuits in our minutes, we do not mention *all* the places, but only *one* place in a circuit. In some cases, one preacher's family resides at one place, and another at another in the same circuit, because it is of great advantage to the work to have a resident preacher at each of the principal chapels.

A *district* comprises several circuits, frequently about five or six. In each district, there is a chairman, chosen at the conference, by ballot, after all the names of preachers in such district are read over. All the preachers of the district form a committee. Except in extraordinary occurrences, each committee does but meet once a year, that is, a few weeks before, or immediately after, the midsummer quarterly meetings. In case any preacher should have any serious accusation brought against him, or any thing very important happening in any circuit in the district which cannot well be settled without the committee being convened, the chairman fixes the time and place of meeting, and informs each member of the

and District-Meetings.

committee accordingly. When trustees, &c. accuse a preacher of immorality, preaching false doctrine, or acting contrary to the rules of discipline, *they* have a power of convening a district-meeting, as will be shewn in some of the following pages. At these *extraordinary*, and also at the *annual* district-meetings, in all disputed cases, a majority of votes is decisive; only all the decisions of the district-meetings are laid before the ensuing conference; and there, are confirmed, rejected, or modified. The chairman of the district presides at these meetings: and a secretary is chosen by ballot, at the time, to record all the determinations, one copy of which is taken to the conference, and another is inscribed in a book kept in each district for the purpose. These meetings last for a day, a day and a half, or two days; seldom more. At these times, there is preaching both morning and evening.

The order of business at the district-meetings is: after singing and prayer, the chairman takes the chair to preside, a secretary is immediately chosen, and then we put down the name of each preacher present. This being done, we proceed to inquire,

1. Are there any objections to any of the preachers in this district as to their morals, the doctrines they preach, and their observance of our rules? Then every preacher's name is pronounced in order, pausing between each, to allow time for objections to be brought forward, if there be any.

2. What preacher in this district has finished his years of probation, and is to be received into full connexion?

3. Who remain on trial? And how long have they travelled? And if any have died the last year, or desisted from travelling, or are to be superannuated, the proper question and answer is now inserted. We then proceed to inquire,

District-Meetings.

4. What is the amount of the yearly collection? And this being taken down, in detail, we next ask,

5. What are the *ordinary* deficiencies? This includes all deficiencies in the usual allowances for preachers' quarterage, quarterly allowance for preachers' wives, children, servant, house rent, coals, and candles. These *ordinary* deficiencies are paid to those to whom they are due. At this sitting the stewards of all the circuits in the district are allowed to be present, during both the paying in of the yearly collection, and the payment of the deficiencies.

If the yearly collection amount to more than the deficiencies, the surplus is paid in by the chairman at the conference; and if the deficiencies exceed the amount of the collection, such deficiencies are claimed at the conference.

6. The committee next inquire, what deficiencies of an *extraordinary* nature there are in the district. This includes all demands for removals which were not paid the last year; cases of affliction, that have not been properly attended to in the circuits where they have occurred, through poverty or inattention, &c. Here come in sundries, such as little helps towards furnishing houses for preachers in some poor circuits, and such like things. The district-meeting is not allowed to pay any of these *extraordinaries*, though there should be money that would do it. But they are entered in the minutes of the district, and submitted to the decision of the conference. Generally the conference pays the sums proposed by the district-meetings, and perhaps would always do so if there was a sufficiency of money.

7. It is asked what boys, sons of preachers, in this district, are *to go to* Kingswood or Woodhouse-Grove school? What boys, *not going to* the school, are to receive the usual allowance from the collection?

District-Meetings.

8. What girls, daughters of preachers, in this district, are to receive the allowance from the collection for Kingswood school? And in both cases we put down whether it be the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, or 6th years of their receiving it: because neither boys nor girls receive this for any more than six years.

9. What chapels are to be built in this district the ensuing year?

10. What chapels in this district do we recommend to the conference to allow collections to be made for the ensuing year? and in what circuits? Then, if any circuit be proposed to be divided, it is considered and determined upon: only none can be *actually* divided without the sanction of the conference. And now, if we have any new rule to propose to the conference for adoption, or any remarks to make upon any thing in our economy, it is brought forward, discussed, and either agreed upon or thrown out. Then, it is asked,

11. Who of us are to attend the conference? This settled, and the names written down.

12. Who is to go as our delegate to the committee for drawing up the rough draft of the stations for the ensuing year? Each sitting of the district committee begins and ends with prayer. The first sitting, each day, is from six o'clock to eight. The second from nine to twelve or after; and the third from two o'clock to near five. And in this the district-meeting is an exact resemblance of the stationing committee, and of the conference.

District-meetings have authority, 1. To try and *suspend* preachers who are found immoral, erroneous in doctrine, or deficient in abilities. 2. To decide concerning the building of chapels. 3. To examine the demand from the circuits, respecting the support of the preachers and their families. 4. To elect a representative to the committee for preparing a draft of the stations for the ensuing

District-Meetings.

year. But the districts have not authority, 1. To make any new rule. 2. To *expel* a preacher. Nor, 3. To station the preachers. But, at the Bristol conference, 1808. It was agreed, That those preachers, who have completed the usual period of probation, without any complaint being brought against them, and whom their district committee, after a strict examination, shall unanimously recommend, shall be deemed *virtually* received into full connexion, without attending the conference. But they shall be publicly received at the first conference they can attend afterwards.

In the General Minutes, page 41. it is declared ; that, “ If it appear on just grounds to any superintendent, that the chairman of the district has been guilty of any crime, or that he has neglected to call the district, when there were sufficient reasons for calling it, such superintendent shall have authority in that case to call a meeting of the district, and to fix the time and place of meeting. The district thus assembled, shall have power, if they judge necessary, to try the chairman, and if found guilty, to suspend him from being a travelling preacher till the next conference, or to remove him from the office of superintendent, or to depose him from the chair, and to elect another in his place. Minutes shall be taken of their proceedings, which shall be laid before the next conference.” This rule has never been either repealed or superseded, and therefore remains in full force.

In the plan of pacification contained in the Minutes of 1795, it will be found, That if the majority of trustees, or of the stewards and leaders of any place, think a preacher to be immoral in his conduct, erroneous in his doctrine, deficient in abilities, or that has broken some of our rules, they themselves may summon all the preachers of the district to assemble at that place, and that they, and every other trustee, steward, and leader, in that

Stationing Committee.

circuit, may assemble with them upon the trial, and every one of these shall have a single vote in deciding on the accused preacher's innocence or guilt; being, in respect to voting, upon a level with every preacher present, except the chairman, who may, when the votes are equal, give the casting vote.

Any preacher refusing to be tried in this way, will subject himself to suspension till the next conference. And in all cases of accusation, a preacher may claim the benefit of such a trial.

The Stationing Committee,

Consists of one preacher from every district in England, Scotland, Wales, and the Norman Isles, chosen by ballot at the district-meetings. The president of the last conference presides at the meeting of these representatives, who meet five days before the beginning of the conference.

A book is prepared with the head place in each circuit written down in it, in the same order as in the printed Minutes of our conferences, with large spaces between the name of the circuits, for inserting the names of the preachers, who may be thought proper to be appointed thither. This committee weighs well the cases of the circuits, and of the preachers. Requests from different circuits, for certain preachers to be appointed for them, are here read; and every inquiry is made, that every place and every preacher may have the most suitable appointment that can be made. Here a great many considerations of various kinds are to be weighed and balanced, as well as possible. To suit *every preacher* according to his views and wishes, and at the same time, to please *every person* among *all* the thousands in our numerous circuits, would be impossible. Petitions for,

The Conference.

and remonstrances against, certain preachers, create the greatest difficulties this committee has to encounter. There seems to be no alternative, but either the people must relinquish the benefits of the plan of itinerancy, or leave the fixing of the stations *entirely* to the conference. This committee of delegates is dissolved as soon as the conference begins, and has no authority to meet any more but by special order. And sometimes a special committee is appointed by the conference to regulate some difficult stations.

The Conference.

The Conference begins the last Monday in July every year. Its meetings are in London, Sheffield, Leeds, Liverpool, Bristol, and Manchester, in regular succession. The sittings begin at six o'clock in the morning, preaching being each morning at five. As soon as the chapel is cleared of the congregation, the president takes the chair, and gives out a hymn; after prayer, the business proceeds. At the first sitting on the first day, we fill up the hundred who constitute the legal conference, according to the deed-poll made by Mr. Wesley, February 28, 1784, and enrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery. Vacancies, more or fewer, occur every year. The hundred is filled up from the other preachers according to seniority. *The hundred only* vote in the choice of the president and secretary. The election in both cases is done by ballot. The votes being counted, the president of the last conference (who always fills the chair till his successor be chosen) declares who is duly elected, and quits his seat, which the new president takes possession of. Prayer is then made to God, to entreat him to assist and bless us in the business we have to go through.

The Conference.

We then choose treasurers and clerks for the different collections, viz. the yearly collection, the collection for Kingswood school, and that for the preachers' fund. We also choose several committees for the expediting of the business of the conference, viz. 1. A committee to examine and digest the minutes of the district-meetings. 2. A committee for book affairs. 3. A committee for the affairs of Kingswood school. 4. A committee to consider our temporal affairs, and devise ways and means, so that the expenditure may not exceed the income. 5. A committee to arrange the plan of collecting for chapels. 6. A committee for missions.

This part of our preliminary business being settled, we proceed to inquire and determine,

1. What preachers are admitted into full connection?

The manner of receiving preachers into full connection at the conference, I must observe is very interesting.

In Mr. Wesley's life-time the preachers were not received in public as they are now. But the present plan is an improvement. Scarcely any thing so much attracts public notice, or causes such deep attention, as this public act. The president takes his station in the pulpit; and those who are to be received into full connection, are placed in the front seat of the gallery, facing him. He then addresses each by name. The questions asked of each, relate to their religious experience, the doctrines they believe, and their willingness to regulate their conduct by our rules, and to enforce these upon the societies where they may labour. Some of them speak largely upon these subjects, and especially as to the manner of their conversion, and how they were brought to undertake the office of a preacher. These seasons are very pleasing and edifying to the congregation, and tend to promote pious zeal.

2. Who remain on trial? At the same time specifying how long each one has travelled.

3. Who are admitted on trial?

4. What travelling preachers have died during the last year?

5. Are there any objections to any of the preachers?

Every preacher's name is then called, and time given for objections to be produced: while the question is asked respecting each preacher in order. But it may be observed, that the district-meeting is now the principal place for the examination of characters. Hence the old form of doing this at the conference, might perhaps be dispensed with.

The districts might be taken in order, and each chair man be called upon to read that part of the Minutes of his district which relates to the characters. To this, in some cases, additional inquiry might be made, whether any thing had transpired since the meeting of the district committee, which required the consideration of the conference. This plan would be more consonant to reason, and the general usages of men, and would save a considerable portion of our best time. When the former method of calling over every preacher's name was instituted, and for almost half a century after, we had no district-meetings. Consequently, the conference was the only time for the proper examination of the preachers' characters. But this observation is merely my own private opinion.

If any be expelled by the vote of the conference, or desist by their own choice, their names are mentioned in answer to the next question, viz.

6. Who have desisted from travelling?

7. How are the preachers stationed this year? The stations are then read, to which every one pays the greatest attention.

The Conference.

The next questions are ; How many preachers' wives are to be provided for, and by what circuits ?

What members are there in the society ?

Then comes on the consideration of the new regulations proposed by the different district-meetings, as recorded in their respective Minutes. And now, the committee appointed to read, arrange, and digest the whole, come forward and read their papers. Some part, perhaps the chief of the extracts, are proposed to become the standing rules of the connection. If there be any difference of opinion as to the propriety of this, it is put to the vote, and a majority of the conference determines which way it shall be.

The various committees bring in their reports, and among the rest, the committee appointed to determine what collections for chapels shall be made the ensuing year, and in what circuits.

Our book-steward appears with his accounts, and details the present state of the concern, and specifies how much money he can spare us to add to the yearly collection, towards paying those parts of the *ordinary deficiencies* which were not paid at the different district-meetings ; also the *extraordinary deficiencies* recommended by the districts ; and lastly, any expenses of removals, &c. which could not be ascertained at the time the districts met. This is often a time of trial, especially to some of the poorer brethren, who, it may be, have little debts to discharge, and to start upon a journey, and sometimes a long one, to a new circuit, with a pocket nearly empty.

Now come on miscellaneous matters, such as addresses, from societies or individuals, on peculiar subjects ; the address from the Irish conference ; the state of Kingswood and Woodhouse-Grove schools, and various other things.

I mentioned page 287, that it was one business of the

Salaries of the Preachers.

district-meetings to determine *who should attend the conference*. As far as circumstances will admit, no circuit is left destitute of at least one travelling preacher during the conference. Every member of the conference, as defined by Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration, and also every superintendent, has a right to attend the conference, without being authorized by the committees of the districts. But excepting these, no one ought to go to the conference without the consent of his district meeting.

Then, and at other times, certain alterations will be proposed and made in the stations of the preachers. At last, the conference breaks up, amidst the exercises of prayer and praise, and mutual and affectionate farewells. And perhaps no instance ever happens that they *all* live to meet again. Some have to go fifty, a hundred, two hundred, some three, or four hundred miles, to their families, to pack up their books and clothes, and depart to circuits they know but little about; but in most places they meet with an affectionate reception. The *people* ought to get great good from the constant change of the preachers; for to the *preachers* it is productive of many inconveniencies and painful exercises.

Preachers' Salaries.

While a travelling preacher endures all this labour and toil, mingled with these trials, and many more, what pecuniary reward does he get? *What sums of money does he receive?*

1. In most circuits a weekly board is allowed by the society among whom the preacher's family lives. In some few places this is very good; in some but middling; and in too many very small. There is no fixed standard for this allowance; and the variations are so

Salaries of the Preachers.

numerous, that it might be improper to mention any specific sum.

2. He receives 16*l.* 16*s.* per annum, to buy clothes and books, &c. for himself.

3. A married preacher receives 16*l.* 16*s.* towards the support of his wife.

4. He receives from 8 to 12*l.* towards the board and wages of a servant. But this may be termed a gratuity.

5. He is allowed 6*l.* 6*s.* in some circuits 8*l.* 8*s.* a year, to feed and clothe each of his children. Till very lately, the annual allowance was only 4*l.*

It is proper, and perhaps necessary to remark, that a Methodist preacher does not make any agreement for any fixed salary, with the people among whom he labours; that what he receives is raised by voluntary contributions; and that if the stewards should at any time withhold from him any part, or even the whole of his usual allowances, he has no redress in law. On these accounts, I am fully of opinion, his income is not taxable. It is not in either the letter or spirit of the law respecting income, to tax voluntary contributions or donations.

The reader will observe, the preacher has the above allowances, so long as he is "*strong to labour.*" But when he is no longer able to do the work, which none are fully adequate to but men in health and vigour, he finds himself in circumstances far less comfortable. A clergyman of the Church of England, or a dissenting minister, however incapacitated for labour, enjoys his salary to the end of life. With a Methodist preacher it is not so. When no longer able to do the work of a circuit, his quarterage, board, &c. ceases. It is certain, however, that a man in the decline of life, especially a debilitated man, needs an increase, rather than a diminution of income.

Rules of the Preachers' Fund.

The Preachers' Fund.

The chief dependance of a worn-out preacher, under God, is on the preachers' fund. Each man subscribing a guinea annually, a little fund is raised, out of which every worn-out preacher receives a small annuity. And when the man is in *very necessitous* circumstances, something more than the fixed annuity may be allowed, from what is so generously contributed to the preachers' fund, by some of our more wealthy and liberal people in different parts of the connection.

The rules and regulations of this institution are as follow :

1. That this Institution be called, **THE ITINERANT METHODIST PREACHERS' ANNUITY.**

2. That every preacher who is now, or shall be hereafter received into full connection with the conference of the people called Methodists, may become a member of this society.

3. As the Methodist preachers, late in connexion with the Rev. John Wesley, deceased, have a property in books, in their book-room, City-Road, London, which property is valued at, and is worth six thousand pounds sterling : and that the said preachers, including the members of this society, agree to convey the said property to this society, to be applied to its use, according to the rules and regulations of the same ; and that the steward of the said book-room shall give a bond to the treasurer of this society, for the above sum of 6000*l.* sterling, bearing legal interest from the date of these presents, which interest is to be paid annually into the hands of the said treasurer, to be applied to the use of this society, according to its rules and regulations.

4. That every new member shall, on his admission,

Rules of the Preachers' Fund.

pay *five guineas* into the funds of this society ; and that every preacher shall subscribe annually *one guinea* : the money to be paid at the time of conference.

5. That every member of this society, who is superannuated by the conference, shall receive from this institution the sum of *twenty-four guineas* per annum, the payments to be made every six months, and to commence from the time in which the said member was superannuated.

6. That the widow of said member, under the regulations hereafter-mentioned, shall receive the aforesaid sum of *twenty-four guineas*, to be paid as above specified, as long as said widow continues unmarried ; but that her annuity, on marriage, shall immediately cease, it being generally understood, that the husband provides for his wife.

7. That every preacher who has travelled regularly twenty years, under the direction of the Conference of the people called Methodists, shall, on being declared superannuated, according to rule the 11th, be entitled to *thirty guineas* per annum, to be paid to him according to the regulation in rule the 5th.

8. That the widow of a preacher, who has been married to the said preacher after he had travelled twenty years, shall not be entitled to the annuity of *thirty guineas*, till she have paid down *ten guineas* for the use of this society, over and above what her said husband had paid before into the society's funds ; but that the said widow may, and shall be permitted, to pay the said ten guineas by instalments of two or more guineas per annum, above her annual subscription.

9. That if any married preacher die before he have travelled ten years, his widow shall not be entitled to the annuity of *twenty-four guineas*, till she have paid *ten guineas* into the funds of this society ; but that the

Rules of the Preachers' Fund.

said widow shall be permitted to pay the said ten guineas by instalments, as in the preceding case.

10. That every annuitant shall continue to subscribe *one guinea* annually to the support of this fund, at the time above-mentioned.

11. That no member of this institution shall be considered as a superannuated preacher, but he who is declared such by the Methodist conference, on account of some corporeal or mental infirmity.

12. That if a member of this society, above fifty-five years of age, marry a woman under thirty, she shall not, at his decease, be entitled to any support from this fund.

13. That a member expelled from the Methodist connection by the conference, or who shall, of his own accord, withdraw from being an itinerant preacher, or from continuing to be a member of this society, shall be considered as excluded, to all intents and purposes, from receiving any benefit from this institution; and that said member shall forfeit all the monies he has paid into its funds.

14. That a treasurer be appointed, who shall receive, and put out as soon as possible to legal interest, the monies belonging to this institution, giving proper security for such monies to the society, and that ——— be appointed the treasurer.

15. That two stewards be chosen annually, who shall be empowered to draw such monies out of the treasurer's hands as may, on the rules and regulations of this fund, be claimed by any member of this society.

16. That if, in the judgment of a majority of the members of this society, its funds should be found to have increased so as to admit of an increase of the annuities, such addition shall be made to the annuities, as in the judgment of the majority of the members the funds shall be deemed capable of affording.

Rules of the Preachers' Fund.

17. That if the expenditure should, at any time, exceed the income, a majority of the members, at one of the annual conferences of the people called Methodists, shall fix on a plan which shall cause the income at least to equal the expenditure, by increasing the annual subscriptions, or by lessening the annuities, or by both, or by any other method which the wisdom of the members may devise, so as still to preserve the institution according to its original spirit and design.

18. Provided, that if this society should be so diminished as not to be able to support *two* annuitants, then the society shall be dissolved, and the remaining monies equally divided among the surviving members.

19. That every thing relative to the management of this society, shall be done by a majority of the members then present.

20. And whereas it has been usual for several of the members and friends of the Methodist societies, late in connexion with the Rev. John Wesley, to subscribe certain monies annually, for the support of superannuated preachers, and their widows, and whereas provision is made in foresaid act, for the receiving such voluntary subscriptions ; it is hereby agreed by the above meeting, that an account of such contributions shall be taken by the steward of the society, and kept separate from the account of the subscriptions of the members of said society : and for the better execution of the merciful designs of said contributions, it is hereby agreed, that a committee of at least eleven persons, according to section the 5th of foresaid act, shall be chosen by ballot, at the annual meeting of said society ; which committee shall hear all claims on the aforesaid contribution, and shall determine on the sum to be allowed to each claimant, as a member of, or claimant on, said society, according to the *fourth* and *fifth* of the present addi-

Rules of the Preachers' Fund.

tional rules and regulations; and if said claimant be dissatisfied with the sum allowed to *him* or *her*, by said committee, he or she may appeal to the society at large, at their next annual meeting, whose judgment shall be final and decisive.

21. That any member neglecting to send his annual subscription at the time above-mentioned, shall be fined, for the first year, *two shillings and sixpence*; for the second year, *half a guinea*; the fines to be thrown into the common stock; but if he neglect to send in his subscription for *three* years, he shall be excluded, and forfeit all the monies he has paid into this fund, unless such person may have been employed by the conference in any of the foreign missions; the case of such a member to be determined by a majority of the members then present.

22. If a man who is superannuated, and who is a claimant on this fund, become again an effective man, he shall cease to be an annuitant: but if he become again superannuated, he shall have the same claim as heretofore, on the provisions and regulations already mentioned.

23. That all difficulties and disputes relative to the business of this society, shall be referred to a committee of eleven persons, chosen by ballot from the members then present; and the judgment of the majority shall be finally decisive, provided the said judgment be not contrary to any thing in the existing rules of this society.

24. That the books of said society shall be so kept, that any member may have free access to them at all times.

25. That all the accompts of said society shall be publicly read over at, and approved by, the annual meeting of said society.

General Collections—for Kingswood School, &c.

26. That these rules be registered, according to the provisions made by an Act of Parliament for the legalization and support of charitable institutions.

The General Collections.

While treating on the subject of pecuniary concerns, I will detail the particulars of all the general collections made among the Methodists.

The weekly collection in the classes is applied to pay the preachers' board, and to other incidental expenses; all the particulars of which are regularly entered in the stewards' books.

The collections made at sacraments and love-feasts, are *solely* applied to the relief of the sick, and poor members of the society, after the expenses of bread and wine are paid.

The quarterly contribution in the classes, when the tickets are given, is applied to pay the preachers' quarterage, with that of their wives and children, servants' allowance, and travelling expenses in the circuit.

The quarterly collection made in the chapels is added to the weekly and quarterly contributions, without which, in many places, the work of God could not be supported. On these occasions, our respectable friends who are not in society, have an opportunity of contributing to the support of that ministry by which they are edified.

Collection for Kingswood School, and the New School at Woodhouse-Grove.

In November, according to a late rule of conference, we make a public collection for Kingswood school, which is about three miles from Bristol. This school was erected by Mr. Wesley, and opened in 1748. He

Kingswood School.

designed it to be a school for the children of the Methodists in general, as well as for children of the preachers. It was employed in this way for some years. But in process of time, it was wholly appropriated to the education of the sons of our itinerant preachers. The preachers' daughters have no right to the school. But as the girls are equally dependent on their parents, it is deemed equitable, that they should have some allowance from the collection made for the support of that institution, during the same number of years the boys are allowed to receive their education, board, and clothes *gratis*, at the school. The term in both cases is for six years.

Since the preachers have been so increased in number, and their children in proportion, the school is not capable of receiving all the boys. Besides, some of them are at a great distance, and it would cost much to take them thither. There are other reasons, of weight, at least with parents, which make them wish to have their children near them. Accordingly, it is allowed, when a preacher's son, of the proper age, does not go to the school, the parents shall receive twelve pounds a year towards clothing, and educating him: this is a saving to the school and to the collection, but a loss to the preacher. This school is entirely supported by the public annual collection. The children are taught reading, writing, accounts, together with the ancient and foreign languages. But a school, the oldest scholar at which, is not above fourteen years of age, cannot be expected to turn out many scholars of great literary attainments. Yet several of that class might be mentioned, to their own honour and that of the school. A good foundation may be laid, and frequently is, at this school: and the conference in 1808, made a rule, that a boy displaying an uncommon aptitude for learning, should be permitted

Yearly Subscription.

to stay at the school a year longer than the usual term. The conference has now a second school at Woodhouse-Grove; an account of which is given in page 149.

Yearly Subscription.

At the meeting of the classes, once a year, we mention to each class, what we call "*The yearly Subscription.*" There is a column on purpose for the entrance of this, on the right hand side of every printed class paper. In this column we note down what each one proposes to give. We do not receive it at the time, but rather desire the leader to collect it in about six weeks, that two collections may not be too near the same time. The uses to which this collection is applied are various. In some few very poor circuits, the preachers can hardly get food and raiment. In some other circuits, though they get their food and raiment, if one of them should have a wife, he cannot get the usual allowances, for her. Some other circuits have two preachers, wives, and families in them, and can only provide for one, or for one and a part of the other. And in some circuits, there are three families, when the circuit only supports two. But in many circuits they support all the families they have. Affliction sometimes seizes a preacher, or some part of his family, the expenses of which cannot be borne by the circuit in which he is stationed. And there are some long and unavoidable removals; the expenses of which are not, and cannot be borne by the circuit he goes from. Otherwise it is our rule, that the circuit in which the preacher was last, shall pay his expenses to his next appointment. It is an essential part of the office of a circuit steward to see to this. For, it is not reasonable that a preacher and his family should make long removals at his own expense. "Who goeth a warfare at his own charge?" Indeed in many cases they could not raise money for this. All

Collection for the Missions.

deficiencies, in these cases are paid out of the yearly subscription, at the district-meetings and at the conference : that is, as far as this collection will go in doing this. Sometimes it will hardly defray half the demands. We add to it all the profits of our book-trade, and then pay all deficiencies as far as the whole will go. And after all, the conference sometimes breaks up much in debt. And whoever considers the vast number of preachers, and the very considerable number of families belonging to them, and the many contingent expenses inevitably arising out of the itinerant plan, need not wonder at what is here asserted. Rather, upon due consideration, he may justly wonder that the deficiencies are not greater.

Collection for the Missions.

Sometime in the year, we make a collection for the foreign and home missions. The foreign missions include those to the British dominions in North America, Newfoundland, the East and West Indies, and Gibraltar. These are very expensive, were it only on account of the high price of their passage to and fro, especially in time of war. And so many preachers dying in the West India islands increases the expense, as others are sent to supply their place. The success, however, has been abundant, and the money has been gloriously laid out. O blessed charity ! assisting to save souls from sin and hell !

The home missions, properly speaking, include those among the poor benighted Roman catholics in Ireland, those in Wales, who preach in Welsh, and those in different dark, and neglected parts of England. Great good has been done by each of these missions ; and every Christian, who has ability, ought to be truly thankful for

Appointment of Missionaries for the East Indies.

an opportunity of shewing his love to God and man, by assisting to promote them. The mission collection is, sometimes made in public, sometimes in private, and sometimes both ways: whereas the yearly subscription has hitherto been made only in private, in the classes; and the collection for Kingswood school is made only in public.

At the Conference, in 1813, it was proposed to send Missionaries to the East Indies, and especially to Ceylon and Java; and Dr. Coke was authorized and appointed to take with him six preachers for that purpose, exclusive of one for the Cape of Good Hope. The new charter of the East India Company, passed in 1812, which made provision for the introduction of Christianity into India, was what gave immediate birth to this mission. I hope great success will attend the undertaking: but time alone can determine this: and the event must be recorded by some future historian.

There are, in the West-Indies, we believe, about fifty thousand negroes who attend upon the ministry of the Word preached by our Missionaries. About thirteen or fourteen thousands of these regularly meet together for Christian fellowship. Many thousands of the poor Africans have, within twenty-eight years, died in a triumphant manner; and thousands now alive, are, through grace, ornaments of the Christian religion. At Sierra Leone, in Africa, we have two schools on the Lancasterian plan. The Governor of the Colony has written a most pleasing letter in favour of that work. There are, at present, in the Colony, about one thousand native children, who were delivered from captivity by our ships of war, all of whom we may take under our care, besides many native adults. Our Society, in the Colony, consists of eighty-six members. We have a small chapel, and a congregation of about four hundred. The Missions in

Subscription to the Preachers' Fund.

Bermuda, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Gibraltar, are in general, in a flourishing state. The Missions among the lower Roman Catholics in Ireland, in their own language, have been very successful. Great numbers of them, in two counties particularly, (Galway and Clare,) have, of late, left their vices and superstitions, and, we have good reason to believe, are savingly converted; besides numbers of others, in various parts of Ireland, where the old Irish language is spoken. In Wales, from two Welsh Missionaries who commenced their mission, in that Principality, about fourteen years ago, have sprung up, under the blessing of the Most High, forty-seven Travelling Missionaries, who preach in the Welsh language, a much greater number of local preachers, and many thousands who are united in religious society.

The Subscription to the Preachers' Fund.

Each year, just before we set off to the conference, we make in private, the subscription for the Preachers' Fund. But we do not mention this to the people in general, as we do the Yearly Subscription, but confine it chiefly to a few of the more wealthy and liberal. Many give to it both liberally and cheerfully. This collection is laid out, in allowing annuities to those worn-out preachers and their widows, who never were members of the new legalized fund; and in extra relief to those who belong to the new fund, but who labour under greater indigence and embarrassments than can be sufficiently relieved by it. These cases are numerous, and often call for prompt and bountiful relief. And can there be a greater charity, than succouring a feeble worn-out minister of Christ, who has spent his health and strength in the service of God and his church; or than displaying our affectionate and

Trustees.

grate ful remembrance of such a man, by shewing kindness to his disconsolate widow? Many of these widows made great sacrifices in becoming the wives of preachers, and have passed through many trials during *their* itinerant life.

Trustees.

When Mr. Wesley was erecting his first preaching house, he was ignorant, it seems, of the best mode of settling it. It was long called the New Room, but now the Old Room, in the Horse-fair, Bristol. He at first settled in on eleven feoffees, but being convinced by a letter from Mr. Whitefield, that, as these men had the power of appointing the preachers, they could turn even him out, if what he said and did should not please them, he called them together, told them the error he had committed, and with their consent cancelled the writings, and took the whole management of the building into his own hands. But after some time, he got the form of a trust deed drawn up by three eminent counsellors, for the proper settlement of the chapels. And it is this form, with such additions as circumstances have rendered necessary, which still continues of general use among us.* It will be seen by the form, that the trustees of our chapels are not *proprietors* of them, but put in trust to see that the chapels remain unalienated from their original purpose. They are put in trust to permit such persons as the conference shall send to preach in the chapels for which they are trustees; in *trust*, to take proper care that *no other* persons preach in such chapels; and in *trust* to interfere in case any preacher should not preach the true Methodist doctrines, though sent by the conference. They have power to choose from among themselves a steward, a treasurer, &c. to receive all seat

* See large Minutes, page 70.

Trustees.

rents, and to make a proper application of the money. In case of necessity, they have power to mortgage the premises, till the debt be paid off. And if it should be determined to build a more convenient one, they may sell the former chapel, and apply the money towards the new chapel.

It will not be improper in this place, to say something about settling chapels on "the conference plan." This subject has often been misrepresented, and has frequently been a source of contention. But the settling of a chapel on what is called the conference plan, amounts to nothing more than this, that the chapel shall not be the private property of the trustees; and that if any of these trustees should change their sentiments, or from any other cause, should be inclined to give the occupation of the chapel to some other party of professors of religion, they shall not have power so to do. The conference have never attempted to get any chapel made over to them, only so as to secure it in perpetuity for the purpose for which it was built. The members of the conference do not claim any property in any chapel; they claim no share of the seat-rents; nor do they pretend to sell, or otherwise dispose of these chapels. And they think the settlement they contend for, just and fair. It has been chiefly owing to the labours of the preachers belonging to the conference, that these chapels have been erected. Most, if not all the subscriptions which have been voluntarily contributed towards erecting these buildings, have been given under the idea, that they were always to be used according to the first intention. The trustees are under no subjection to the preachers. No man need become a trustee but by his own choice: every trustee may refuse to act as such whenever he chooses; the preachers cannot compel the trustees to expend any part of the monies arising from the seats in any particular manner what-

Trustees.

soever, but as the deed directs; and though the trustees are frequently under the necessity of signing securities for monies borrowed on the chapels, yet there has not been a single instance, since the commencement of Methodism, of any trustee, or his heirs at law, sustaining loss in consequence of this. When difficulties have occurred, which could not otherwise be got over, the conference has directed collections to be made in different circuits for their relief. But should they not be relieved, it is provided for in the trust deeds, that they may mortgage the chapel, till the debt can be paid off.

On several accounts, the trustees of the Methodist chapels, as a body, are a most respectable description of men. And to convince them fully of the esteem and confidence of the Preachers, the conference in 1794, decreed, that "No trustee, however accused, or defective, in conforming to the established rules, shall be removed from the society, unless his crime be proved in the presence of the trustees and leaders."

The following rules should be attended to in the building of chapels.—None ought to be built without the approbation of the superintendent; and he should mention it to the next district-meeting, and get it recorded in the minutes of the district, that it may be printed in the minutes of the following conference. A rule was made many years since, that no chapel should be built, except two-thirds of the expense were previously subscribed. But this rule has not been well observed. Perhaps it cannot, with propriety, be conformed to in all cases. However, great care should be taken, that chapels be not involved in insupportable debts. And it would prevent many unpleasant things, if the trust-deeds were executed before, or at least soon after, the buildings are begun.

The out-lines, and proper form of a trust deed for one

Outline of a Trust Deed.

of our chapels, is as follows:—" This indenture made in the——year of the reign of our Sovereign LORD George the Third, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, and Ireland, King, defender of the Faith, &c. and in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and—— between A. B. of C. in the county of D. on the one part, and F. G. H. I. J. K. &c. on the other part, witnesseth, That in consideration of the sum of five shillings of lawful money of Great Britain, by the said F. G. H. I. J. K. to the said A. B. truly paid before the sealing and delivering hereof, the receipt whereof the said A. B. doth hereby acknowledge and for divers considerations thereunto moving, the said A. B. hath granted, bargained, and sold, and by these presents doth bargain and sell, unto the said F. G. H. I. J. K. &c. and their executors, administrators and assigns, all that lately erected house or tenement, known by the name of the Methodist chapel, situated in —— aforesaid, together with all the ways, drains, and privileges to the said premises appertaining, and all the profits thereof, with all the right, title, and interest in law and equity, to have and to hold the said chapels and other premises to the said F. G. H. I. J. K. &c. and their assigns for ever. Nevertheless, upon special trust and confidence, and to the intent that they and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, do and shall permit from time to time, and at all times for ever, such persons as shall be appointed at the yearly conference of the people called Methodists, held in London, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, sheffield, or Liverpool, or elsewhere, specified by name in a deed, enrolled in Chancery, under the hand and seal of the Rev. John Wesley, and bearing date the 28th day of February, 1784, and no others, to have and to enjoy the said premises, in order that they may therein preach and expound God's holy word, and perform all other acts of religious worship. Provided

Committee for guarding Privileges.

that the persons so appointed, preach no other doctrines than are contained in Mr. Wesley's notes upon the New Testament, and his four volumes of sermons, by him published. Provided also that the same preacher shall not be sent to the said chapel, for more than two years successively, without the consent of the said trustees given in writing. The said trustees shall have full power to choose from among themselves, a steward or treasurer, who shall receive all the seat-rents, &c. which money so received, shall be applied towards paying the interests of all monies due upon the premises, for repairs of the said chapel, and toward reducing the principal till the whole be paid. That in case of necessity, the said trustees shall have full power to mortgage the premises, till the debt contracted be fully discharged. Or, if the Methodist society in that place should be dissolved, or come to nothing, or if a larger or more convenient chapel should be wanting, then in either of the afore-mentioned cases, the trustees for the time being, shall have full power to sell the premises, and in the latter case, shall dispose of the purchase-money towards building another chapel.

In witness hereof the said A. B. hath hereunto set his hand and seal, &c."

The Committee for guarding our Privileges.

This committee was first appointed at the conference held in 1803. In the minutes of that conference, page 30, it is asked, "How may we guard our privileges in these critical times?" Ans. "A committee of ten shall be formed to attend on this important business." The purposes for which this committee was instituted were various. In some places, our congregations had been disturbed by riotous mobs, and it was deemed necessary to seek redress by law. But proceedings at law require judgment and prudence. And that we might enjoy the benefit of

Supplement.

these, the conference directed, that this committee should be consulted previously to the commencement of any law-suit, and that if any law-suit should be commenced without its approbation, the connexion should not be responsible for the expenses incurred by it.

It was appointed also to watch against any attempts, to abridge our privileges by any Act of Parliament. The *training-bill* was passed about this time ; and had it not been for the exertions of this committee, our people might have been compelled to learn the military exercise on the sabbath, and even our travelling preachers might have been put under the instructions of a drill-serjeant. It is true, this committee has not always done all that might have been expected from it ; but at present it bids fair to render most important service to the connexion, by its laudable, judicious, and spirited exertions. The committee is appointed annually ; and that appointed at the conference 1813, consists of the President and Secretary of the Conference ; all the Preachers appointed for the two London Circuits ; the Superintendents of the Deptford and Brentford Circuits ; William Marriott, Sen. Esq. Joseph Butterworth, Esq. M. P. Mr. Robert Middleton, Mr. Joseph Bulmer, Mr. Launcelot Haslope, Mr. William Jerram Mr. Thomas Allen, Mr. David Bruce ; Thomas Thompson, Esq. M. P. of Hull ; Thomas Holy, Esq. of Sheffield ; Mr. John Ward, Jun. of Durham ; Mr. James Ewer, of Bristol ; Mr. Joseph Dutton, of Liverpool ; Mr. James Murrow, of Liverpool ; Mr. Benjamin Sadler, of Leeds ; Mr. John Burton of Manchester ; Col. Sandys of Helstone ; and William Carne, Esq. of Penzance.

Supplement.

As there are divers other particulars relating to the discipline of the Methodists, but which I could not well bring under any of the foregoing heads, (and I wished as

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far as possible to pursue a regular plan,) I shall now gather up a *selection* of the fragments that remain.

No travelling or local preacher, trustee, steward, or leader shall disturb the peace of a society, by speaking for or against the introduction of the Lord's Supper in our societies; or the old or new plan, so called. Should they do so, they shall be subject to the trial and penalties before-mentioned, 1795.

No preacher shall be required to administer the Lord's Supper against his own mind. And should it be allowed by the conference, where all the preachers of the circuit are unwilling to administer it, the superintendent shall invite a suitable preacher from a neighbouring circuit to give it. General minutes, page 56.

Any *new rule*, made to bind the societies at large, if objected to at the next quarterly-meeting, in any circuit, the major part present, and also the preachers, thinking the observance of such rule would be injurious to that circuit, it shall not be enforced that year. But should a *second* conference confirm the rule, it will then be binding upon the whole connexion. In such disputed cases, only peaceful methods shall be pursued, 1797.

Mr. Wesley's deed of declaration requires, that no preacher shall be stationed in the same circuit for more than three years together, except a clergyman of the Church of England. But by a resolution of the conference, it is determined, that no preacher shall be stationed in the same circuit for more than *two* years together, except in certain special cases. And, by another resolution of conference, it is determined, that no preacher shall be re-appointed to any circuit, till he shall have been eight years away from it, 1799 and 1807.

It was also fixed by the conference, that no president shall be chosen again to that office in less than eight years.

A member of our society removing into some other circuit, is not to be received into another society, unless he take with him a certificate from the superintendent, in these words, "A. B. the bearer is now a member of our society, in ——. I believe he has a sufficient cause for removing."

Let us disperse, said Mr. Wesley, the "Word to a Smuggler;" expel all who do not leave off smuggling; and silence every preacher who attempts to defend it, 1768.

No person shall be continued a member of our society, who learns, or performs, the military service, as a *volunteer*, on the Lord's-day. But, meeting on the parade, in order to attend divine service, shall not be considered an infringement of this rule. And any person shall be excluded our society, who, after proper admonition, will, on the Lord's-day, continue a spectator of the exercise of the volunteers, 1782.

In general, *women* ought not to preach among us, (1.) Because a vast majority of our people are opposed to it. (2.) Because their preaching does not seem necessary, there being a sufficiency of preachers, whom God has accredited, to supply all the places in our connexion with regular preaching. But if any woman among us think she has an extraordinary call from God to speak in public, (and we are sure it must be an *extraordinary* call that can authorize it,) we are of opinion that she should in general, address her *own sex*, and *those only*. And upon this condition alone, should any woman be permitted to preach in any part of our connexion, and when so permitted, it should be under the following regulations:

1. They shall not preach in the circuit where they reside, until they have obtained the approbation of the superintendent and a quarterly meeting.

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2. Before they go into any other circuit to preach, they shall have a *written* invitation from the superintendent of such circuit, and a recommendatory note from the superintendent of their own circuit, 1803.

A preacher going on a mission to the West Indies, or the British dominions in North America, is not to return home in less than six years. But should his health require it, he may pay a visit to the United States, or the island of Bermuda, Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick, 1802.

If any member of our society apply to the quarter-sessions for a licence to preach, without being approved of as a preacher at the quarterly-meeting, as expressed by the seventh section of the general minutes, he shall be expelled from our society. And if any person may have already obtained a licence, contrary to the above resolution, and attempt to claim exemption from parish-offices, &c. by virtue of such licence, such person shall be expelled from the society.

The regularly appointed *local preachers*, though a respectable and useful body of men, are not wholly set apart for the ministry, and therefore it is not consistent with the *spirit* of the Act of Toleration, that they should claim any advantage in point of exemption from offices, &c. because they are licensed, 1803 and 1809.

Let the sums necessary to afford the usual allowance to the preachers' children, be furnished by the several circuits on a regular and equitable plan: and in order to this, let the children in future be stationed on the circuits as well as the wives, 1804 to 1809.

No person shall be permitted to receive the Lord's Supper among us, who is not a member of our society, without a note from the superintendent, which note must be renewed quarterly, 1805.

No preacher shall marry during the time of his proba-

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tion; but when is that probation to be considered as terminated? When he is received into full connection, either formally at the conference, or virtually, by being so entered on our minutes, 1806. Or, after being received into full connection at the district-meetings, 1808.

Every local preacher shall meet in class, and conform to all our rules of discipline. In this respect, let none be excused. Let no local preacher keep love-feasts, without the consent of the superintendent, nor in any wise interfere with the business of the superintendent. Let every one keep his own place, and attend to the duties of his station. General minutes, page 13 and 14.

Every preacher shall be considered as a supernumerary, for four years after he is no longer able to take a circuit, and after that, shall be deemed superannuated. *Ibid.* page 55.

Every superintendent shall be at liberty to attend the conference or not. But in case of absence, he shall send all necessary papers by the representative of his district. *Ibid.* page 55.

No circuit shall be divided without the consent of the quarterly-meeting, the district-meeting, the committee of delegates, and the conference. *Ibid.* page 55.

Every preacher, prior to his being admitted into full connexion, shall write an account of his life, and give it to the editor of our books. *Ibid.* page 56.

At the conference, all letters not directed to, or belonging to the president, or the committee of delegates, are to be paid for by the circuits from which the preachers come. And the keeping of all the horses to be paid for in the same way. *Ibid.* page 56.

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It may be proper in this place, to give some account

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of the book-trade, which originated with Mr. Wesley. He published many books of his own composition, besides those which he extracted from other authors. I have mentioned before, how the profits of these publications were disposed of, so that when he died, he had little more than his clothes and his books. His books consisted partly of his own private library, and partly the stock which he had upon sale, in the book-room, together with a printing-office, types, printing-presses, &c.

These books, and printing materials, constituted the chief subjects of his last will and testament, of which I have before inserted a complete copy. What those books were, the reader will best learn from the catalogue of the books now sold under the authority and direction of the conference. Our sale of books is much enlarged, which may be accounted for by the increase of our societies. But the whole of the profits are appropriated to the support of the gospel. Our book-trade is not the private property of any man. And those who have the trouble of conducting it, receive nothing but their wages for their labor. The preachers, who are the chief venders of our books, in the different circuits, have less than half the common allowance made to booksellers for their trouble. Considering the vast quantity of books sold by the agents of the conference, the smallness of the commission generally allowed for selling them, and how remarkably little is lost by *bad debts*, it is easy to see that the book-room must afford considerable pecuniary aid to the connexion. But, whatever profits are derived from it, they are applied to help the poorer circuits, to relieve the distresses of the preachers and their families, and in evangelizing the inhabitants of the British empire. While it is an institution, calculated to do the greatest good, in diffusing religious and useful instruction, it is, as it respects the profit of it, one of the

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noblest charities, and produces a fund of the most beneficial description.

For the better management of the book-concerns, the conference appoint *the book-committee*. It consists of the editor, the book-steward, and all the preachers stationed in London, for the time being. The committee when met, determines when a new edition of any of the books belonging to the conference shall be printed; when the price of any of them shall be raised; when any new work, which may be offered in manuscript, shall be accepted and printed; and, in short, all matters relating to the book-trade.

CHAPTER IV.

*BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF EMINENT
MINISTERS.*

THOMAS MAXFIELD, was a man of piety, and his ministerial labours were remarkably owned of God. Lady Huntingdon heard him expound the scriptures, and said to Mr. Wesley in a letter, "I never mentioned to you that I had seen Maxfield; he is one of the greatest instances of God's peculiar favour that I know; he is raised from the stones, to sit among the princes of his people. He is my astonishment. The first time I heard him expound, expecting little from him, I sat over against him, and thought, what a power of God must be with him to make *me* give any attention to him. But before he had gone over a fifth part, any one that had seen me, would have thought I had been made of wood or stone, so quite immoveable I both felt and looked. His power in prayer is quite extraordinary.—I could either talk or write for an hour about him."

After preaching for some years, Mr. Maxfield was ordained by an Irish bishop. It is said, the bishop ordained him out of compassion to Mr. Wesley, that he might not work himself to death. Mr. Maxfield was very useful, and was in high esteem, both with Mr. Wesley and the people. But in the year 1762, George Bell, and some others, gave way to enthusiastical flights and irregularities, which were disgraceful to religion; and very unhappily, Mr. Maxfield was induced to take part with them. Mr. Wesley had acted with great caution and tenderness towards these well meaning, but mistaken people. But at last, he saw the necessity of adopting firm and decisive measures. The result was,

Mr. John Nelson.

that Mr. Maxfield left Mr. Wesley, and took away about two hundred of the London society. Divers of these were among Mr. Wesley's most esteemed friends, and it has been thought that this was the heaviest trial which he ever experienced.

Mr. Maxfield got a commodious chapel near Moorfields. He preached there for many years; was much respected, and very useful. For several years before his death, he was very friendly with the Methodists, and our preachers frequently preached in his chapel. A paralytic stroke put a speedy end to his life; but it is believed, that he exchanged a world of trial, for a world of rest and felicity.

JOHN NELSON

Very properly ranks among the first Methodist preachers. He was a native of Birstal, near Leeds, and was born in the year 1707. Very early in life he was under serious concern for the salvation of his soul. In general he acted according to the light he had, and was still wishing, and endeavouring, to learn the ways of the Lord more perfectly. His business led him to reside some years in London, being employed in the building of Somerset House. Here he went about seeking rest, and finding none. He went from one place of worship to another, and, at last, he had an opportunity of hearing Mr. Whitefield, and Mr. Wesley. His mind gradually expanded, till he was made wise unto salvation. In the memoirs of his life, written by himself, he gives an account of his hearing Mr. Wesley the first time, which was out of doors, in Moorfields. He says, "As soon as he got upon his stand, he stroked back his hair, and

Returns from London into Yorkshire, and begins to preach.

turned his face towards where I stood, and I thought fixed his eyes upon me. His countenance struck such an awful dread upon me, before I heard him speak, that it made my heart beat like the pendulum of a clock; and when he did speak, I thought his whole discourse was aimed at me." Soon after this, Mr. Nelson was made a partaker of that peace of God that passeth all understanding. Among many oppositions and difficulties, he continued to cleave to the Lord, and to walk in his fear, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

But after some time, it was impressed upon his mind that he must return to his native place. I shall insert his own account of this affair. He says, "About ten days before Christmas, I went to St. Paul's, and while I was at the communion-table, I felt such an awful sense of God resting upon me, that my heart was like melting wax before him, and all my prayer was, "Thy will be done; thy will be done." I was so dissolved into tears of love, that I could scarce take the bread; and after I had received it, it was impressed upon my mind, I must go into Yorkshire directly. Accordingly, believing it to be the will of God, he packed up his clothes, and set out; he found much of the Lord's presence on the road; but had no more thoughts of preaching than of eating fire.

Mr. Ingham had preached in the neighbourhood of Birstal, being then connected with the Moravians, and the doctrine of the new-birth had caused much talk in those parts. John Nelson's acquaintance asked him what he thought of this doctrine. He told them that this *new faith*, as they termed it, was the old faith of the gospel; and he related to them his own experience. This was soon noised abroad, and more and more came to inquire concerning these strange things: some put him upon proving these great truths; and thus he was

Mr. John Nelson,

brought unawares, to quote, explain, compare, and enforce several parts of the scriptures. This he did at first, sitting in his house, till the company increased so, that the house could not contain them. He then stood at the door, which he was commonly obliged to do every evening as soon as he came from work. And this may give the reader an idea of the way and manner in which many of the Methodist preachers have been called to the work of preaching the gospel. For some time, Mr. Nelson's friends, and his nearest relatives, opposed him, and were ashamed of him; but he was steadfast and immovable, and abounded in the work of the Lord. His success was very great in and about Birstal. Sinners were daily converted. Almost every night he went out of town, often four or five miles, after he had done his work; and commonly returned the same night, be the weather what it might.

In a while, Mr. John Wesley paid him a visit on his way to Newcastle. He said to Mr. Wesley, "Sir, you may make use of Jacob's words, 'The children thou hast begotten in Egypt before are mine; for I freely deliver them to your care.'"

It was about May when Mr. John Wesley came into Yorkshire; and, towards Michaelmas, Mr. Charles Wesley, and Mr. Graves came: and from the time of their coming into Yorkshire, to the return to the south, which was about a month, some part of which they spent at Newcastle, eighty were added to the societies.

The Christmas following, Mr. Nelson was invited by William Shent, to go and preach at Leeds. But the attempt was considered so hazardous, that he and the society about Birstal, kept a day of fasting and prayer, before he went. As he went over the bridge, he met two men, who said to him, "If you attempt to preach in Leeds, you must not expect to come out again alive;

Visits Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, London, Bristol, &c.

for there is a company of men that swear they will kill you." He answered, "They must first ask my Father's leave; for if he have any more work for me to do, all the men in the town cannot kill me till I have done it." He preached to a large congregation, which behaved well, and received the word with meekness.

After this he made an excursion into Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Lincolnshire, preaching with great success, though accompanied with opposition and persecution. Mr. Wesley sent for him up to London. But by this time he had nearly worn out his clothes, and did not know where the next should come from. His wife said, he was not fit to go any where as he was. He answered, "I have worn them out in the Lord's work, and he will not let me want long." And two days after, a neighbouring tradesman, that did not belong to the society, came to his house, and brought him a piece of blue cloth for a coat, and a piece of black cloth for a waistcoat and breeches. When he had got ready, he set out for London on foot, but one of his neighbours was going on horseback, who took his pace, and sometimes let him ride. He preached at Nottingham-cross, in his way. After spending a little time in London, he set out for Oxford, and after preaching there, and at several other places, he reached Bath, and then Bristol. After a short stay there, he set out for Cornwall. One day, after travelling twenty miles without baiting, he and Mr. Downs, who travelled with him, came to a village, and inquired for an inn. But they were told there was none in the place, nor any on the road within twelve Cornish miles. Mr. Nelson said, "Come, brother Downs, we must live by faith." But they ventured to go to a house, and ask for something. The woman of the house said, "We have bread, butter and milk, and good hay for your horse;" for they had one horse between them.

Mr. John Nelson,

When they reached St. Ives, Mr. Nelson worked at his business for several days. After this he went and preached at St. Just, the Land's-End, and several other places. On his return from Cornwall, he was benighted on the Twelve-mile-common, and was wet to the skin; but by the providence of God, he came to the house where he had called in going down. He knocked at the door, and the woman knew his voice, and said, "The Lord bless you! come in." They pulled off his wet clothes, put on dry ones, got him something warm for supper, and took his wet clothes out of his bags, which they rinsed, dried, and ironed. He sang a hymn, prayed, and gave them an exhortation that night. The next morning, the man of the house gave notice to that and another village, so that by seven o'clock, he had about three hundred people to preach to, who all seemed to receive the word with joy. He was soon after informed, that the man and his wife, who received him, had received the Lord that sent him.

After preaching at many other places in the way, he got home, and found his wife much better than she had been, though never likely to recover her former strength; owing to the ill treatment she met with on her return from Wakefield, when Mr. Larwood was mobbed there. After they had abused him, she with some other women, set out for Birstal, a mob followed them into the fields; when they overtook them, she turned about and spake to them, upon which all the men returned without touching them; but the women followed them till they came to a gate, where they stopped them: they damned her, saying, "You are Nelson's wife, and here you shall die." They saw she was big with child, yet beat her on the body so cruelly, that they killed the child, and she went home and miscarried immediately.

Mr. Nelson, after labouring with his hands, and

Returns to Yorkshire—takes up a serpent without being hurt.

making excursions to preach in several counties, returned to Birstal, and proceeded in his former way. The clergyman, who was in the commission of the peace, had caught the flame of persecution, and was apparently the first in that parish to do so. One sunday morning, on seeing Mr. Nelson present, he drew from his pocket an imbittered harangue against the Methodists, and concluded with these words, "If the new lights have a commission from God, Let them, as Christ hath said, (Mark xvi. 17, 18,) cast out devils, let them speak with tongues, let them take up serpents, and we will believe them."

In Birstal, there is a small brook between the town and the church, and as John was returning, he saw the women start back with fear. A serpent was coiled on a lump close to the path! John said, I have no enmity against it, and it has none against me." On that, he took it up with his naked hand, and laid it outside of his coat in the bend of his arm, carried it about a hundred yards, and then let it go. This circumstance that John Nelson had taken up a serpent, was presently told the parson. He became furious, and made a second attack upon him in the afternoon concerning his fanaticism in taking up a venomous reptile, at the risk of his life. He was not aware of the great honour he was hereby conferring on Mr. Nelson.

Happy if this outrage had been confined to the pulpit. The ingenious malice of this clergyman laid a scheme for Mr. Nelson's ruin. It was to impress him for a soldier, and send him out of the country. What a mercy that clergymen are not the arbitrators of our religious liberties! With that view he went round to the justices prior to their meeting, who entered into his views, and engaged an officer on the recruiting service to be in rea-

Mr. John Nelson,

diness to take Mr. Nelson away, though he had a family, and was near forty years of age.

The Almighty, whose way is wisdom, was pleased to permit this tyranny to take effect, because he would exercise the faith of his servant, and employ him, now protected by arms, in preaching in some of the most populous towns in the North, where it would have been difficult at that time for other preachers to go.

Pursuant to this malignant design, after Mr. Nelson had done preaching at Aldwalton, about a mile from Birstal, Joseph Gibson, the constable's deputy, (an ale-house-keeper, who found his craft in danger,) pressed him for a soldier. Mr. Nelson asked him by whose order this was done. He said, "Several of the inhabitants of the town, who did not like so much preaching." And by his talk, it appeared, they were they of his own craft, and the clergyman, who had influenced them. They took him to a public house. Mr. Charlesworth offered 500*l.* bail for him till the next day. But the parson would suffer no bail to be taken. He was removed the next day to Halifax. When he was brought before the commissioners; they smiled one at another, as soon as they saw him. They told the door-keepers not to let any man come in; but Mr. Thomas Brooks had got in with him: and they said, "That is one of his converts." They asked the constable's deputy what he had against him; he answered, "I have nothing to say against him, but that he preaches to the people; and some of our townsmen don't like so much preaching. They broke out in laughter, and one of them swore he was fit to go for a soldier, for there he might have preaching enough. Mr. Nelson said, "Sir, you ought not to swear." "Well," said the commissioners, "you have no licence to preach, and you shall go for a soldier." He answered, I have

Is pressed for a soldier, and confined in a dungeon.

as much right to preach, as you have to swear." One said to the captain, "Captain, is he fit for you?" He answered, yes: "Then take him away." They refused to hear several of his neighbours, who were ready to speak to his character. The minister of Birstal, who was one of the commissioners, displayed very great enmity against him, and did all he could to injure him and his friends in the esteem of the other commissioners. The papers sent on his behalf were not suffered to be put on the file, lest, if they should be called for, they should make against them.

From Halifax he was conducted to Bradforth, and put into the dungeon, which was then a loathsome, stinking place, at the top of the Ive-gate. One of the soldiers offered the captain, that if he would give him charge over Mr. Nelson, he would answer with his life, that he should be forth-coming in the morning. Mr. Nelson offered to pay a guard to be set over him in a room. But the captain answered, "My order is to put you in the dungeon." In the morning, about four o'clock, his wife, and several friends, came to the dungeon, and spoke to him through the hole of the door. His wife said, "Fear not; the cause is God's, for which you are here, and he will plead it himself. Therefore be not concerned about me and the children: for he that feeds the young ravens will be mindful of us. He will give you strength for your day; and after we have suffered a while, he will perfect that which is lacking in our souls, and then bring us where the weary are at rest."

The next day he was guarded to Leeds, and in jail just as the service began at the church. Several offered to give bail for him, and even a stranger offered a hundred pounds. But the offer was refused. A friend, however, sent him a bed to lie on.

The next day, he and some other pressed men, were

Mr. John Nelson,

marched to York. He was taken before several officers, who seemed to rejoice as men that had taken great spoil, and saluted him with many grievous oaths. He asked them, "Do you believe there is a God, and that he is a God of truth?" They said, "We do." He answered, "I cannot believe you, I tell you plainly." They asked, "Why so?" He replied, "I cannot think that any man of common understanding, who believes that God is true, dare take his name in vain; much less do you believe that God can hear you, when you pray him to damn your souls." They said, "You must not preach here; you must not talk so to us that are officers." He told them, there was but one way to prevent it, and that was to swear no more in his hearing.

As he was guarded through the streets of York, the streets and windows were filled with people, who shouted and huzzaed, as if he had been one who had laid waste the nation, while others indulged in silence the feelings of their hearts. But the Lord made his brow like brass, so that he could pass through the city as if there had been none in it but God and himself. But during his stay in York, he had full exercise for his understanding, faith, and patience. However, God gave him friends, and some even among the soldiers. And when he left the city, many of the people said to him, "We are sorry you are going so soon from York; but if you get your liberty, we hope both you and Mr. Wesley will come: for we have need of such plain dealing, and thousands in this city would be glad to hear. We expected some of you two or three years ago; but you had no regard for our souls, till God brought you by force. Surely you were not sold hither, but sent for our good: therefore, forget us not."

From York they were marched northward through Easingwold, Northallerton, Darlington, and Durham to

Is discharged from the army, and goes to London.

Sunderland. The people crowded to see him in his journey, and he embraced every opportunity of instructing them in the truths of the gospel. God wonderfully supported him in his trials; and Mr. Wesley contrived to see him at Durham. He exhorted him to watch and pray, and told him, he did not doubt but his captivity would turn to the glory of God, and the furtherance of the gospel. "Brother Nelson," said he, "lose no time; speak and spare not, for God has work for you to do in every place where your lot is cast: and when you have fulfilled his good pleasure, he will break your bonds in sunder, and we shall rejoice together." They then prayed, and commended each other to the grace of God. The day following he was marched to Sunderland. Here he met with sundry comforts and encouragements, and some trials and persecutions. An officer who thought well of him, procured him a furlough to Newcastle for a week; and shortly after, he received a letter from Mr. Charles Wesley, informing him, that the Earl of Sunderland, had assured Lady Huntingdon, that he should be set at liberty in a few days. He was discharged accordingly. One of the officers bore testimony, that he had done much good among them: for that they had not one third of the cursing and swearing among them which they had before he came.

He returned home to his wife, children, and friends, at Birstal. After some time he went to York; and found that the seed sown in his captivity had sprung up; for nineteen had found peace with God, and twice as many were under convictions, though they had no one to instruct them in his absence, but the little books he had left them.

Some time after Mr. Wesley sent for him to London, and many came to hear him out of curiosity, when they heard it was the man who had been in prison; and some were

Mr. John Nelson,

convinced of the truth they heard. While he was in London, he received a letter, inviting him to go and preach at Sunderland; two men, who had conversed with him, when there, having found the Lord, and said that their souls panted for the salvation of their neighbours. Soon after, therefore, he preached at Sunderland Cross, to the greater part of the inhabitants of the town, who behaved well, and God visited many with his salvation. Sometime after he visited Bristol, and spent four months there, and in some parts of Somerset and Wiltshire. God wrought by his instrumentality: "Though the instrument be ever so weak," said he, "if God command it, a worm shall shake the earth."

At this time, the Scotch rebels entered England, and reached Derby, but were soon turned back; which, occasioned a general joy. To many, however, this joy was of the frantic, and licentious sort. Accordingly when Mr. Nelson left Bristol, he met with many sufferings. Almost at every place where he came to preach, mobs were raised, as if they were determined to kill him, because the rebels were conquered. Even in the neighbourhood of his native place, he met with great abuse. And when he paid another visit to York, he was cruelly persecuted, and narrowly escaped being killed by lawless and violent mobs. When preaching on Heworth-moor, (falsely called Hepworth-moor in Nelson's Journal,) about a mile north of York, a popish gentleman brought a mob, and cried out, "Knock out the brains of that mad dog;" and perfectly gnashed with his teeth. Immediately a shower of stones came and hit many of the people, till not one could stand near him. As he was going away, one struck him with a piece of brick on the back of his head, and he fell flat on his face, and must have lain for some time, had not two men helped him up; but he could not stand. The blood ran down his back

Is ill treated by a mob, and threatened to be killed.

quite into his shoes, and the mob followed him through the city, swearing they would kill him when they got him out of it. But a gentleman pulled him into his house, and dispersed the mob. After resting a while, he rode to Acomb, (improperly called Acklam in his Journal,) a town about two miles to the west of York, where he was to have preached at five o'clock. But while he and two of his friends were walking in a field near to where he intended to preach, two stout men came, and one of them swore, "Here he is; I will kill him if there be not another man alive." He pulled off his hat and wig, and gave them to his companion, saying, "If I do not kill him, I will be damned." He then fiercely attacked him, threw him down, leaped with his knees on his belly several times, till he had nearly beaten the breath out of him, and caused his head to bleed again. He then went to the gentlemen, who had hired him and the other man to kill Mr. Nelson, and said, "Gentlemen, I have killed the preacher, he lies dead in the croft." The parson's brother said, "Well, we will see ourselves; we will not take your word." Upon which, he and about twenty more came to Mr. Nelson. But he had recovered his breath, was turned on his face, and lay bleeding upon the ground. They lifted him up, but as soon as he could speak, he said, "Your mercy is only to make way for more cruelty. Gentlemen, if I have done any thing contrary to the law, let me be punished by the law; I am a subject to King George, and I appeal to the law; and I am willing to go before the Lord Mayor, and the King's magistrate." But they cursed him and the K—g too, saying he was as bad as him and his fellows, or he would have hanged them all like dogs before that time; and one said, "If he were here, we would serve him as bad as you." The parson's brother cursed Mr. Nelson, and said, "Ac-

Mr. John Nelson,

according to your preaching, you would prove our ministers to be blind guides, and false prophets; but we will kill you as fast as you come." When he got into the street, they huzzaed, one gave him a hasty pluck by the right hand, and another struck him on the left side of his head, and knocked him down. This they did eight times. And when at last he was unable to rise again, they took him by the hair of his head, and dragged him upon the stones for near twenty yards, some kicking him on his sides and thighs with their feet, as the others dragged him along. Then six of them got upon him, and said, they would tread the Holy Ghost out of him. They then told him to order his horse, that they might see him out of the town. But he thought they intended to kill him privately, and so refused to go. Afterwards they attempted to throw him into a draw-well, but were prevented. Some friends got him up, and helped him into the house. Then the mob set out for York, singing obscene songs: and this was Easter Sunday. This was about the year 1749. From that time till his death, in 1774, he was steadfast, and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. He fought the good fight, and kept the faith till he finished his course by an apoplexy at Leeds, and was buried at Birstal, where he was born. His friends put a monumental stone over his remains, to tell where he lies, and to perpetuate his memory. But this has been far better perpetuated by his labours, and the account which he published of the first forty-two years of his life.

He was a man of great bodily strength and vigor; of a good understanding and ready thought; of firm integrity and genuine piety; mighty in the Scriptures, and apt to teach; and his labours in preaching the gospel were crowned with great success. He was the first Methodist, and the first Methodist preacher in Yorkshire. Since then, WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!

Mr. Grimshaw is appointed perpetual curate of Haworth.

The Rev. Mr. GRIMSHAW,

Is a name well known to the religious world. This eminently good and useful man, was a clergyman of the Church of England. He was born at Brindle, near Preston, in Lancashire, in September, 1708. In 1731, he entered into holy orders; but some time afterwards was vain and trifling, the reverse of all serious godliness. At this time, he was minister of Todmorden, nine miles north of Rochdale. However, in two or three years he became more thoughtful; and in 1742, he became a genuine Christian, and a zealous preacher of the gospel.

In May, that same year, he was appointed to the perpetual curacy of Haworth, in the parish of Bradford, Yorkshire. Haworth is one of those obscure places, which like those fishing towns on the coast of the Sea of Galilee, where our Saviour bestowed so much of his time and labours, owes most of its celebrity to the preaching of the gospel. Its name would scarcely have been known, had it not been connected with the name of the celebrated Grimshaw. The bleak and barren state of the adjacent country, bore no improper resemblance to the state of the inhabitants, who, when he went first among them, were in general very ignorant, careless, and wicked, having little more sense of religion than their cattle, and uncultivated like the rocks and hills which surrounded them. But by the blessing of God upon his zealous and abundant labours, very many were awakened out of their sinful sleep, were brought to fear God, to live godly, righteous, and sober lives, and were filled with peace and joy in believing. His lively, striking, and impressive method of preaching, was soon much talked of, and attracted great numbers to hear him, from every part of the surrounding country, and often from a great distance,

Rev. Mr. Grimshaw,

Nor was this merely during the period of novelty, but continued through more than twenty successive years.

As the poor make their want of better clothes an excuse for not attending divine service in the day time, he established, chiefly for their sakes, a sermon, on Sunday evenings, after preaching forenoon and afternoon. And he began a method in 1743, which he continued to the end of his life, of preaching in each of the four hamlets under his care, three times every month. By this, the old and the infirm, who could not attend the church, had the truth of God brought to their houses ; and many who were so careless as scarce ever to go to the church, were thus allured to hear.

It was not long, before the holiness of his life, the zeal and diligence with which he instructed the people of his charge, and the great good which many from the neighbouring parishes had obtained by attending his ministry, caused him to have many invitations to preach at the houses of divers persons in other parishes. And when these petitioners, like the man of Macedonia, cried, "Come over and help us," he believed it to be his duty to go. And thus, while he provided abundantly for his own flock, he annually preached near three hundred times to congregations in other parts. He formed two circuits for himself, which, with some occasional variations, he traced every week alternately. One of these, he pleasantly termed his *idle week* ; because during *that* he seldom preached more than twelve or fourteen times. In his *working week*, he often preached twentyfour, and sometimes thirty times. An itinerant clergyman was a strange thing : and Mr. Grimshaw, was perhaps the first minister in Yorkshire, whose zeal prompted him to preach in other parishes, without obtaining consent from the ministers belonging to them.

He enters into union with the Methodists.

From the year 1745, he entered into a close union with the Methodists, and acted as Mr. Wesley's assistant, in some parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire. The parts then formed what was called, the *Haworth Circuit*, of which Mr. Grimshaw was considered as being the perpetual superintendent. He visited the classes quarterly, and renewed their tickets; attended quarterly meetings, and frequently preached upon those occasions; and often presided at love-feasts in the Methodist societies. He attended the conference, when held at Leeds, and always preached. At that time, the conferences were held at London, Bristol, and Leeds, alternately, and no other place. His employments would not allow him time to go to either of the former places: but though he was never there, he had a great name, and had many friends in London. He lived in strict friendship with the Methodist preachers; they lodged at his house, and preached in his kitchen; and he regularly published in his church when the preaching would be in his house. And he was so far from envying the talents, popularity, or success of the preachers, that he greatly rejoiced in their labours. He heard even the weakest of them with great and humble attention, and many of them he preferred in honour to himself. One time, after William Shent had been preaching in his kitchen, he fell down before him, saying, "I am not worthy to stand in your presence." And at another time, when Benjamin Beanland had been preaching in the same place, he embraced him, and said, "The Lord bless thee *Ben*, this is worth a hundred of my sermons."

Mr. Grimshaw's was a very extensive circuit, and though they travelled much on horseback, it required three or four preachers, besides him, to supply it. But he regularly supplied his own church on the Sundays. His house and church were ever open to Mr. Whitefield;

Rev. Mr. Grimshaw.

or any other gospel minister, who might occasionally visit those parts; but in respect to discipline, and doctrines in general, he held the same sentiments as Mr. Wesley.

The Lord gave great success to his labours. It is true, his manner of life excited much envy, jealousy, and displeasure in many of his clerical brethren; but none of these things moved him, nor did he count his character, or even his life, dear unto himself; but went on, testifying the gospel of the grace of God. Nor did he meet with any serious and determined marks of disapprobation from his *superiors* in the church. But he was opposed by some who hated to be reformed. At Colne, a riotous mob, hired for the purpose, and headed by the parson, disturbed him while preaching.

Mr. White's proclamation for enlisting men into the mob, raised against the Methodists, ran as follows:

"Notice is hereby given, That if any man be mindful to enlist into his Majesty's service, under the command of the Reverend Mr. George White, Commander in Chief, and John Banister, Lieutenant General of his Majesty's forces, for the defence of the church of England, and the support of the manufactory in and about Colne, both which are now in danger, let him repair to the drum-head, at the Cross, where each man shall have a pint of ale for advance, and other proper encouragements."

This Mr. White, was educated at Doway, in France, for orders in the Church of Rome; but, upon his recantation, was noticed by Archbishop Potter, and by him recommended to the Vicar of Whalley, who appointed him minister of Colne. He was not devoid of either parts or literature, but childishly ignorant of common life, and shamefully inattentive to his duty, which he frequently abandoned for weeks together to such accidental assistance as the parish could procure. On one occasion he is said to have read the funeral service more

This only publication was a Defence of the Methodists.

than twenty times in a single night, over the dead bodies which had been interred in his absence. With these glaring imperfections in his own character, he sought to distinguish himself by a riotous opposition to the Methodists. But, in his last illness, it is said he sent for Mr. Grimshaw to get the assistance of his instructions and prayers, being now fully convinced of the impropriety of his former conduct.

This minister also preached and published a sermon against Mr. Grimshaw and the Methodists, which gave occasion to the only publication Mr. Grimshaw ever favoured the world with. It was printed in 1749, and entitled, "An Answer to a Sermon published against the Methodists, by the Reverend Mr. George White, M. A. Minister of Colne and Marsden, in Lancashire. By the Reverend William Grimshaw, Minister of Haworth, Yorkshire."

Mr. Myles has done a real service to the world, by republishing this pamphlet, in connexion with his valuable life of Mr. Grimshaw. The pamphlet consists of eighty pages, twelves, and is a very good defence of Methodism, particularly as circumstances then stood. But it has nearly been lost to the world; for it was with difficulty, after a considerable search, that a copy of it was procured.

When Mr. Wesley or Mr. Whitefield visited Haworth, the custom was, after the prayers had been read in the church, to go through a window upon a scaffold erected for the purpose, in the church-yard, and after preaching to congregations consisting of thousands, they returned into the church, and administered the Lord's Supper to great numbers. This often took up a good while; and in the meantime, a preacher continued preaching out of doors. These were times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and many drew water with joy out of the wells of salvation.

Rev. Mr. Grimshaw.

It was a constant custom of Mr. Grimshaw's to attend the feasts and wakes, kept in the neighbouring villages, accompanied by two or three local preachers, whom he invited to assist him. And after these men had preached, one after another, he concluded the service by preaching himself. This plan produced the most happy effects; many were hereby kept from following the multitude to do evil, and from contracting debts, or wounding their consciences, while others got real and lasting good to their immortal souls.

At Haworth there are two feasts every year. It had been customary with the inn-keepers, and some other inhabitants, to make a subscription for horse-races at the latter feast. These were of the lowest description, and frequented by the lowest of the people. They exhibited a scene of vulgar rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, wild uproar and confusion. Mr. Grimshaw had frequently attempted, but in vain, to put a stop to this mischievous custom. His remonstrances were but little regarded, and probably any other man would have been abused, in making the attempt to stop an established practice so agreeable to the taste of vulgar depravity. They so revered his character, as to hear his expostulations with a measure of patience, but still persisted in those practices which so much grieved him. But he gave himself unto prayer for some time before the feast, entreating God to put a stop to this evil. When the race-time came, the people assembled as usual, but were soon dispersed. Before the race could start, dark clouds covered the sky, and soon poured forth such excessive rains, that the people could not remain on the ground; and it continued to rain excessively during the whole three days appointed for the races. This event, though it took place many years since, is still remembered and spoken of at Haworth. It is a common saying among

His Exertions to reform and benefit his Parishioners.

the people, that "Old Grimshaw put a stop to the races by his prayers." It proved an effectual stop: for there have been no races in that neighbourhood from that time.

What was brought him for dues, he took without being rigorous. He used to tell the people, "I will not deserve your curses when I am dead, for what I have received for my poor labours among you. I want no more of you, than your souls for my God, and a bare maintenance for myself."

His whole life proved this declaration to be true. He required nothing but the plainest food and raiment; and he would frequently say, that these were more than he deserved. He hated wastefulness, and was strictly frugal: and would sometimes say, "How can those persons answer before God, for the food, which they deny to poor Christians, and throw away upon their dogs!"

It was his frequent and almost constant custom to go out of the church while the psalm before sermon was singing, to see if he could find any idling in the church-yard, the street, or in the public houses. And many of those whom he found he would drive into the church before him. A person passing by a public-house, one Sunday forenoon, was surprised to see several persons making their escape, some jumping out at the lower windows, and others over a wall. He was alarmed, thinking a fire had broke out in the house; but upon inquiring, found all this commotion was caused by the discovery that the *Parson* was coming. They were as much afraid of him as of a justice of the peace.

He endeavoured to suppress that custom, so prevalent in country places, of walking in the fields on the Lord's day, between the services, and in the evening. He spoke against it in the pulpit; and visited the usual haunts in order to detect and reprove those who were guilty. At

Rev. Mr. Grimshaw.

some distance from Haworth there was a place to which many young people frequently resorted. One evening he disguised himself, so that they did not know *him* till he was so near them as to know who *they* were; he then spoke, charging them not to move. He took down all their names with his pencil, and ordered them to attend him at his house, on a day, and at an hour which he named. And they all went as punctually as if they had been served with a judge's warrant. He led them into a private room, formed them into a circle, commanded them to kneel down, he kneeled down in the midst of them, and prayed for them very earnestly and at some length. He closed the interview by an affecting lecture. This discipline never needed to be repeated; for it is said, the place has never been resorted to on a Sunday evening from that time to this.

When at home, he had a meeting for prayer and exhortation, every morning, in the summer at five, and in the winter at six o'clock. These meetings were early and short, that the people might not be kept from the duties of their calling, whether in the field or in the house. He thought that to begin the day with religious exercises, would sweeten labour, prepare for trials, and fortify against temptations. His own diligence was very great. The exertions of the most industrious man in trade, could not exceed him in endeavouring to do good to men, and bring glory to his Maker. In every action of common life, and in his ordinary and familiar conversations, a savour of piety was still to be discovered. And his mind was prompt and fertile, in improving the little incidents of daily occurrence, to convey and impress spiritual and profitable lessons. Herein he resembled our Saviour, who instructed his disciples and his hearers, by observations on birds and flowers, to which he pointed

His Constitution vigorous—was above the Fear of Man.

them. In the pulpit, he depicted sin in such strong and frightful colours, as to make sinners tremble.

His constitution was vigorous, his health good, his spirits lively, and his zeal truly fervent. He was rather low in stature; broad-set and strong; and a good deal marked by the small-pox. He could endure much labour and fatigue; and he often shewed less mercy to his body, than a merciful man would do to his beast, traversing the bleak neighbouring mountains in all weathers. Thus did the love of Christ constrain him to spend and be spent in the best and most important of all employments.

The fear of the Lord raised Mr. Grimshaw above all the fear of man which bringeth a snare. He exhorted and rebuked with all authority, as well as with long-suffering and gentleness. He was bold and faithful in his private reproofs and admonitions, as well as in his public ministrations. And he had not only an easy method of doing this, but sometimes a very peculiar one.

A man, of whose benevolence he had some suspicion, he made application to, near bed-time, disguised as a poor man, and solicited the favour of a lodging for the night. He hereby proved the man to be what he suspected. Instead of granting the supposed poor man his petition, he loaded him with abuse.

In his discourses, he generally made use of very plain language, and sometimes language that was homely and familiar. I will give a few specimens.

Upon one occasion, he exhorted the people to be thankful for the many mercies they had received at the hand of the Lord, saying, "Some of you can sit down to your table, and eat and drink, and never once think of God, so as either to ask a blessing upon your food, or to return thanks. You are worse than the very swine; for

Rev. Mr. Grimshaw.

the pigs will *grunt* over their victuals ; but you will say nothing."

In giving some advice to Mr. Paul Greenwood, and Mr. Thomas Mitchell, two young preachers, he said, "If you are sent of God to preach the gospel, all hell will be up in arms against you. Prepare for the battle, and stand fast in the good ways of God. You must not expect to gain much of this world's goods by preaching the gospel. What you get must come through the devil's teeth: and he will hold it as fast as he can. I count every covetous man to be one of the devil's teeth; and he will let nothing go for God and his cause, but what is forced from him." As he was favoured with a liberal education, at the grammar-schools of Blackburn and Heskin, and afterwards at Christ's-College, in Cambridge, it could not be from want of learning that he used occasionally this plain, familiar style, or as it is sometimes termed, *market-language*. He knew the ignorance of the people, and studied to speak to them as they would best understand his meaning.

Unwearied laboriousness; deep, yet cheerful piety; a plain, familiar style, which he made use of in order to be better understood by an auditory, in general unlearned and ignorant; accompanied by almost unequalled usefulness; form the chief features of his character.

As a polemic writer, Mr. Fletcher was superior to Mr. Grimshaw. But in *extensive* and *abundant* usefulness, as a preacher, Mr. Grimshaw was greatly superior to Mr. Fletcher. And yet, Mr Fletcher was not only an able, but a very useful preacher; and God crowned his labours with great success.

In a spiritual, as well as natural sense, there are soils comparatively barren as well as fruitful. And I think it but just to observe, that Mr. Grimshaw laboured in

Was hospitable—of a catholic Spirit—compassionate.

the more fruitful, and Mr. Fletcher in the more barren field.

He was a lover of hospitality, and in the summer season, had many visitants. Sometimes the house was full. He would give beds to as many as he could, and then, unknown to his guests, would sleep in the hay-loft himself. Early one morning, one of these occasional lodgers, was not a little surprised to find Mr. Grimshaw cleaning the boots of his friends, whom he supposed were still asleep.

He was a lover of mankind, and a follower of him whose tender mercies are over all his works, and who is good to the thankful, and to the unthankful. He tenderly sympathized with the poor and afflicted.

He never sought either patronage or preferment. He was of a catholic and candid spirit. If good was done, he cared not who might be the instrument. His bowels yearned over careless sinners. He beheld them, yea, even the most profligate, with grief and compassion. He embraced every favourable opportunity of speaking an useful and seasonable word to any person he might fall in with on the road. And in some, the good seed, though sown on the highway, took root, and brought forth good fruit.

It was his custom to go from house to house, warning, teaching, and exhorting the people respecting their soul's salvation. He was very punctual in fulfilling his appointments. He was sure to be at the place where he was expected; and exactly at the time.

His usual hour of rising, was at four o'clock in summer, and five in winter. In his family in the morning, before prayer, he read the psalms and lessons appointed for the day. In summer, he went to bed about ten o'clock, and in winter about eleven.

Few men ever thought or spoke more meanly of them-

Rev. Mr. Grimshaw.

selves than he did. Nor could he bear to hear others speak well of him. He was a hearty friend to the established church, and firmly attached to the constitution and government of his country. He feared God, and honoured the king.

Not knowing who might be his successor at Haworth church, and anxious that the gospel he preached might still be preached there, in 1758, he built a chapel at his own expence. His words on this occasion were, "if ever the gospel should be turned out of the church, I hope it will find a refuge in the chapel." The cause of religion sunk very low some years after he died. But the chapel is now galleried, and well attended, and we have a good society and congregation there.*

In the spring of 1763, Haworth was visited by a malignant putrid fever, of which many persons died. Before he was taken ill, he had a presentiment that one of his family would fall a victim to the prevailing contagion. In visiting the sick, he caught the infection: and from the first attack expected and welcomed the approach of death. He was greatly supported in his affliction, and his consolations abounded. When Mr. Venn asked about the state of his mind, he cheerfully replied, "As happy as I can be on earth, and as sure of glory as if I was in it." At another time he said to his housekeeper, "O Mary! I have suffered the last night, what the blessed martyrs did; my flesh has been, as it were, roasting before a hot fire. But I have nothing to do but to step out of my bed into heaven, and I have one foot upon the threshold already." His old friend, Mr. Jeremiah Robertshaw, an itinerant preacher, calling to see him in his illness, Mr. Grimshaw took hold of his hand at

* The author of this Book, thought himself highly honoured, in 1805, in being the chief instrument in the repairing and gallerying the chapel thus built by Mr. Grimshaw.

His Death and Character.

parting, and said, "The Lord bless you Jerry: I will pray for you as long as I live; and if there be such a thing as praying in heaven, I will pray for you there also." "Mark the perfect, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Doubtless the reader will add, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Amen.

He gave up the ghost, April the 7th, 1763, in the 55th year of his age, and in the 21st from his settlement at Haworth. He was buried in the church at Luddenden, near Halifax. The funeral was plain; yet attended with circumstances that made it more solemn and affecting than even the pompous funeral of Nelson. Almost the whole neighbourhood followed his corpse for six or seven miles, making the air resound with sighs and groans, and bedewing the road with their tears. Mr. Venn, then vicar of Huddersfield, preached a funeral sermon for him at Luddenden and Haworth, and Mr. Romaine preached another in London, at St. Dunstan's in the West.

Mr. Grimshaw was a burning and shining light. He was of a cheerful, generous, lively turn of mind; very courteous, and open as the day, in his conversation with the people wherever he went. He was a natural orator; spoke with great fluency; and preached the gospel with great ability and approbation; yea, with that authority which belongs to messengers of God of the first order. And with such success did the Lord crown his labours in his own parish, that one year, after having buried eighteen persons, he said, he had good reason to believe that sixteen of them were gone to heaven.

Mr. Joseph Cownley.—Becomes an itinerant preacher ;

MR. JOSEPH COWNLEY

Was a native of Leominster, in Herefordshire, and was born June 26th, 1723. During his childhood, he had serious impressions upon his mind respecting his soul and eternity. He discovered the wickedness of his heart; but did not understand the plan by which the health of his spirit might be recovered. He availed himself of the conversation of such serious people as he had any acquaintance with; but did not understand the right ways of the Lord, till he heard Mr. Wesley preach several times in Bath, to which city he had accompanied a neighbouring gentleman. Under these discourses, he learnt the knowledge of himself, and the way of salvation. For this salvation, he made humble and earnest application to the throne of grace, and soon found the pearl of great price.

In the year 1744, he began to preach a little in and near the place of his nativity. And these his first efforts, were not only approved of, but were crowned with success, being instrumental in the reformation, and salvation, of some of his neighbours.

In about two years he became an itinerant preacher, under the direction of Mr. Wesley. For this great and arduous undertaking, he was eminently qualified, and his labours were abundant, both in England and Ireland. As every thing is interesting which throws light upon the early periods of Methodism, the following fact may gratify some inquirers. Mr. Cownley told the author of this work, in 1789, when stationed together at Glasgow, that Mr. Wesley, on admitting him and others into full connexion as preachers, about the year 1747, put a Greek Testament into the hand of each, and said, "Take thou authority to preach the gospel, &c." But this prac-

Is afflicted with a fever, and goes to reside at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

tice was discontinued, and obviously for reasons of prudence and delicacy only! He was much esteemed as a preacher; and what is still better, the Lord accompanied the word spoken by him with the powerful influences of his Spirit, so that sinners were converted, and saints edified. But in 1755, he had a severe fever, that so affected his nervous system, that his useful labours were considerably interrupted, and an incurable pain settled in his head: from this pain he was never entirely free, by day or by night, for between thirty and forty years.

After this affliction, he spent the chief part of his life at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and the places in its vicinity. He possessed a competency, and gave his labors without reward. In these he was diligent, as well as faithful, to the end of his days. He was very highly esteemed for his work's sake; and great deference was paid to his judgment in matters relating to religion, and religious societies. If he spoke, the matter was generally decided. The depth and soundness of his understanding were well known, as well as the integrity and impartiality of his heart. He thought much; and as he did not talk much, what he said was the more attended to. Whatever place he favoured with his visits, he met with a hearty welcome, and was received as a messenger of the Lord.

At the conference in 1788, he was prevailed upon to accept of an appointment to the Edinburgh and Glasgow circuit. But life was too far advanced, and his powers were too much debilitated, to leave him fully adequate to the constant labour of those places. However, he exerted the strength he had, and the people highly esteemed and revered him.

About Christmas, when he removed from Edinburgh to Glasgow, he requested Mr. Wesley to let him have a young man to assist him in his work in that city; and he did me the honour to mention my name. The request

Mr. Joseph Cownley,

was granted, and I went to him on New-year's-day. Till the July following, I resided in the same apartments with him, and heard him preach, and preached before him several times every week: and I have ever reflected upon that favoured period of my life with pleasure, though there were some circumstances belonging to the government of the society, of the most disagreeable nature I ever met with. But we had peace and harmony between ourselves, and our days, weeks, and months, succeeded each other in comfort. He was a man of genuine and eminent piety; of a sound, clear, and deep understanding; and of various information. He possessed genuine Christian gravity, and yet was easy, familiar, pleasant, and sometimes a little facetious in conversation. His manners were plain and simple, yet very agreeable. He was very seldom, if ever, out of temper himself, and very seldom contributed to ruffle the temper of any other person. He gave attendance to reading and meditation: he was seldom without a book in his hand. His sermons were well digested and arranged; generally short, and yet containing much matter; he appeared to possess endless variety, and yet always dwelt upon matters of essential importance. In the pulpit he was never threadbare, nor ever took up his time, or that of the people, with things of inferior importance, for the purpose of increasing his variety. He constantly wrote short sketches of his sermons; and in his latter days, he put the divisions and subdivisions upon a small slip of paper, and laid it upon the bible in the pulpit, while he preached, in order that if his memory failed him, he might relieve himself by casting his eye on his paper. This is a practice I do not recommend; but he was an old man, with a decayed memory, and had to preach constantly to the same congregation. In general, he preached twice every week in our chapel, called the Orphan-house, in

His last illness and death.

Newcastle, and that for between thirty and forty years. After delivering thousands of discourses in the same pulpit, it was a general remark, "Mr. Cownley has always something new." In most particulars, he was a perfect model for a preacher. Plainness, perspicuity, rational and scriptural argument, were visible in all his sermons. Gaudy oratory, and noisy declamation, he despised, and uniformly avoided. His aim was, not to be a popular, but a scriptural and useful preacher. And yet he had popularity, and that of the best sort, in a high degree. He was an excellent husband, an affectionate father, and invaluable friend. He was a man of peace, who studied to give no offence to Jew, or Gentile, or the church of God. He was harmless and undefiled, a child of God without rebuke, amidst a crooked and perverse generation. He was *an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile.*

In the former part of the year, 1792, he evidently appeared to be fast ripening for a better country. The concerns of eternity seemed to absorb his whole soul. When engaged in prayer, with his family, and at the houses of his friends, he was melted into tears, while he enjoyed the closest union with God. During a ministerial visit to the country, in September, he got cold, which brought on a complaint in his stomach, with which he had been frequently afflicted. His last text was, Psalm cv. 3. "Let the heart of them rejoice who seek the Lord." And with this discourse, Sunday, September 23, 1792, he closed the labours of near half a century.

On his return home, the best medical assistance was procured, but in vain. "My heavenly Father," said he, "is my best physician: he is my only physician." A friend said, "The blood of the Redeemer is precious in our dying moments." He answered, "O precious! O

Mr. Christopher Hopper.

precious ! what should I do but for that ?" Seeing him in extreme pain, the doctor said, " Do not be afraid." Mr. Cownley replied, " The fear of death, Sir, has long since been removed ; I am not afraid to die, but I am afraid lest I should become impatient under this affliction." When the physician withdrew, while the sweat fell in large drops from his face, he fervently exclaimed, " Jesus, I am thine. Thou art my only physician. But if it is thy will, and I have finished the work thou hast committed to me, then take me to thyself."

Afterwards he said, " Lord, how little have I done for thee." The last sabbath before his death, the consolations of God were so sweet to him, that his cup of joy ran over. " I feel," said he, " such love in my heart, that if I were carried to the chapel, I could sit and preach to the people." But his work was done ; and angels were ready to carry his spirit to the regions of rest and happiness.

In October, when at Cork, in Ireland, I received a letter from my esteemed friend, Mr. Gaulter, informing me of his death. In the evening of the 8th of October, he sat down to supper ; his daughter Mary had withdrawn into an adjoining room. She shortly heard a noise and returned : but he was speechless ! Reclining his head on the chair without a struggle or a groan, he resigned his soul into the hands of God.

MR. CRISTOPHER HOPPER,

Was among the first Methodist preachers, and deserves to be had in remembrance. He was born on Christmas-day, 1722, at Ryton, in the Bishopric of Durham.

While he was very young, he was greatly affected by the awful death of his school-master, who drowned him-

Becomes serious, through the death of his School Master.

self. He had catechised his scholars twice every week, and made them attend the church on Sundays, and all holidays appointed for divine worship. One week Mr. Hopper thought, he was more devout than usual. The following Sabbath he received the Lord's-supper at Ryton church. A few days after, a gentleman persuaded him to play a game at cards. This was followed by such distress of mind, that after much inward conflict, he sunk into despair, and committed suicide. This melancholy event was the means of seriously impressing young Hopper's mind with thoughts of death, judgment, hell, and heaven; and he began to discern the difference between the righteous and the wicked. These impressions were increased by a bodily illness, which continued, nearly two years. When the doctor pronounced him incurable, he was alarmed, and filled with fear. But he read the bible, and other books of piety, called upon God, and began to see more into the sinfulness of his heart and life. In a while, he obtained a good hope through grace, and was comforted. He felt himself happy in the love of God, and of all mankind. But after his health was restored, he did not cleave to the Lord, and became again entangled by the-world and sin.

After spending some time at school, he inclined to be a musician, and applied himself to that science with great assiduity. He then undertook the management of a waggon, on the rail-ways between the coal-mines and the river Tyne. For five years he employed himself in this business, and agriculture: and during this period he was a slave to folly and sinful pleasures. But conscience often reproved him, and he sometimes felt sorrow of heart. He found Satan's service perfect drudgery, and all earthly things vanity and vexation of spirit. Sometimes he reflected on the happiness he had enjoyed in his affliction: but it then appeared to him as a dream.

Mr. Christopher Hopper.

A remarkable and very providential escape from instant death, by the overturning of a wagon, had a good effect upon him. He was thankful, humble, and desirous to be guided into the way of peace. But spiritual guides, of the right sort, were then very scarce. When Mr. Hopper was about twenty years of age, Mr. Wesley, and his brother Charles, visited Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and the neighbourhood; great crowds flocked to hear them; and a large society was soon formed in Newcastle. All mouths were filled with Wesley, and his followers; some for, and many against them. A considerable bustle about religion, was made among all sects and parties, and Mr. Hopper bustled among the rest. At length he became truly serious. He heard for himself, and received with meekness the ingrafted word, which he proved to be the power of God unto salvation. It came to his heart with power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. The veil was removed, and the true light shone upon him. His cry was, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He saw into the plan of salvation through Christ Jesus, and he believed on him to the saving of his soul, and went on his way rejoicing. Soon after, Mr. Wesley formed a little society, at Low-Spenn, where Mr. Hopper lived, and made him the leader. He attended four or five meetings every week, where they prayed, sung psalms and hymns, read the scriptures, and exhorted one another to love and good works. God gave them prosperity. Many of his old companions were awakened, and turned from sin; and his aged mother, a sister, and a brother, also, who had been a notorious sinner, but who lived to be an ornament to religion, till he died in a good old age. Mr. Hopper began to preach, and he was soon invited to many places in the neighbourhood. The fire kindled, and the flame spread: many sinners were turned from darkness to light, and from the power

Suffers much persecution—Becomes an itinerant preacher.

of Satan to God. But, as might be expected, he met with persecution. Men of all ranks, combined their influence to stop this blessed work of God. For a mechanic to stand up to preach the gospel, was deemed intolerable. Mr. Hopper, and the other lay-preachers, were opposed, not by scripture and reason, but by lies and slander, rotten eggs, brick-bats, stones, and such like arguments. The common cry was, "Press them for soldiers; send them on board a man of war; send them to prison, or knock out their brains; *for there is no law for them.*" But this was a great mistake, there was law; but hardly a magistrate could be found who had principle or courage enough to do them justice, John Nelson, and several others, were pressed about this time; and the persecutors eagerly sought for an opportunity to seize on Mr. Hopper; but he was remarkably protected. *Tribulation and persecution arising because of the word,* induced him to consider more attentively his call to the work, and to count the cost. He wished only for a rational and scriptural evidence; and after a serious and deliberate consideration, he was satisfied, that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him, and that it was his duty to *preach the word.* For about five years, he taught a school, and was remarkable in his profession for writing a fine hand, and for the attainments he ultimately made in the Hebrew language. During this time he preached much, and formed many societies amongst the hills in the north; especially at Hindley-hill, Alledale; Weardale, Ninthead, and Alstone, and in crossing the Fells, or enormous mountains, he endured much hardship, and was exposed to great dangers. He now became an itinerant preacher, and in 1750, accompanied Mr. Wesley to Ireland, and the year after to Scotland. A great part of the year 1753, he spent in Ireland, principally in Dublin and Cork. In 1755, he buried

Mr. Christopher Hopper,

his first wife. She was an affectionate woman, a faithful friend, and a very agreeable companion. She made his joys and sorrows her own, and they walked in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

In September, 1756, in company with four other preachers, he embarked once more for Ireland, and spent the winter in Dublin. In the spring he went to Cork and Limerick. After sustaining reproaches, and various severe trials, he was taken ill of a fever: the doctor thought he would die; Mr. Hopper took his leave of the world, having clear views of paradise, and the world of happy spirits. When apparently on the brink of eternity, he fell into a sweet sleep, and dreamt that he was dead, and that his spirit was with Christ, in unspeakable happiness; but when he awoke, his fever was gone; and from that moment he began to recover. His bodily strength was soon restored, and he went forth again into the vineyard.

In April, 1759, he married his second wife. "God," saye he, "made his face to shine upon us, and amply rewarded me for all my days of mourning. He doubly restored to me all temporal and spiritual blessings. This was a day of prosperity; and, therefore, I thought it a day of danger. I was now favoured with an agreeable, loving companion, a good house, a pleasant situation, and all things to make life easy and comfortable. I must confess I found a desire to settle, but not to leave my Master's work. I began a little business, and had now a fair opportunity to step into the world; but my dear Lord would not suffer me: he shewed me that his good work would bring me far more gain in the end, than all the shops in Newcastle." Leaving his business to the care of Mrs. Hopper, he paid another visit to Scotland, and laboured in different places till the following year. From 1763, to 1765, he also spent in Scotland: the two follow-

His labours, character, and death.

ing years in and about Newcastle-upon-Tyne. During these two years, he laboured under much bodily affliction, and appeared to be nearly worn out: but he could say, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

The next two years, that is, from August, 1768, to August, 1770, he spent in the Birstal circuit, with great satisfaction and success. The next year he removed to Bradford; and then spent two more years among his friends in the Newcastle circuit. The two years following he laboured in and about Liverpool and Bolton. He paid a short visit to Ireland: and from the conference in 1777, to that in 1779, he laboured in the Bradford circuit; the two years following in the Colne circuit. Not long after this, in consequence of the increasing infirmities of age, he took up his residence at Bolton-le-moors, being now a superannuated preacher. During the forty years, he was a travelling preacher; and the whole period of his ministry was about fifty-seven years, being the oldest preacher upon the list at the time of his decease. He was a man of sound understanding, and extensive information, while his piety was genuine and exemplary. As a preacher, he was a son of thunder. His manner, was peculiar to himself, and his energy was frequently very extraordinary. At these times, his discourses would impress his congregations in a most uncommon manner. In person, he was tall and graceful; in manners plain, but agreeable; and in spirit firm, independent, and courageous. He was without partiality, or hypocrisy, and feared the face of no man. In his last illness he displayed great patience, possessed great inward peace, and was favoured with frequent and strong consolations. A few days before his death, he said, "I have not a shadow of a doubt; and as for the enemy, I know not what is become of him; I have neither seen him, nor heard of him for a long time; I think he has quitted the field."

Mr. Thomas Walsh,

He retained his confidence in God to the last; and in joyful hope of future glory, fell asleep in Jesus, in the eightieth year of his age.

Though Mr. Hopper displayed occasionally such great talents as a preacher, and had been so long, and so useful in the work, yet he had no disposition to assume dominion over his brethren; and in his whole conduct made it manifest, that he did not wish to *lord it over God's heritage*. His life was unblemished; his labours were abundantly useful; and his death was that of an aged apostle, who could say, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give unto me."

MR. THOMAS WALSH.

THIS eminently holy and useful young man, was a native of Ireland, and brought up in the bosom of the *Church of Rome*. He was born about the year 1730. He was savingly converted to God in the days of his youth; and in the year 1750, began to preach the everlasting Gospel. He was a man of uncommon talents for the Ministry, and of very extensive learning. Mr. Wesley thought him the best Hebrew scholar he had ever met with. "I never," says Mr. Wesley, "asked him the meaning of a Hebrew word, but he immediately told me how often it occurred in the Bible, and what it meant in each place."

After engaging in the work of the Ministry, he was indefatigable in his studies and labours; which, being of a weak constitution, proved too much for him; and, in a short time, brought down his frail tabernacle. His

Reflections on the state of his mind in his illness.

diary, which has been published proves him to have been a man of deep piety and close walking with God.

The illness, which terminated in his removal from this world to a better, may be dated from February 24th, 1758, a few days after his arrival at Bristol, on his way to Ireland. After preaching twice as usual, and studying hard all day, he was seized with violent pains in his head, and in all his bones. He, however, rose the next morning at his usual time and preached, retiring afterwards to his accustomed exercises; but still feeling the pressure of the disorder, he said, "*My body trembles with weakness, but my soul is happy in God.*"

March 4th, the day he took to his bed, he wrote in his diary as follows: "Good is thy will O God! Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. Thou reignest in righteousness; though no man can know either love or hatred, by all that is before him. Thou givest account of thy ways to none, but assurest the righteous that *it shall be well with him*; and that thy corrections are with this design, that we may partake of thy holiness. I am in thy hands, O my God! Work thy perfect will in me, and sustain me in this trial. I call upon thee in the day of trouble; and that I shall glorify thee, and praise thee yet more and more."

At another time, he makes the following remarks on his state.

"I had a constant witness from the Holy Ghost that I was a child of God; however, the sins of my whole life were brought to my remembrance, particularly those of my heart. For though God preserved me from falling even once into those sins, in which I lived in the days of my ignorance; nevertheless, I saw my pride, desire, self-will, self-indulgence, levity, and mispending time;—my want of love to God, charity to my neighbour, and more serious concern for my own soul, &c."

Mr. Thomas Walsh.

So severe a judge was this good man of himself, while, in the judgment of all that knew his manner of life, he was exemplary in every respect, and remarkable for the contrary of what he thus lamented. "The more holy and eminently religious we are," says the pious Bishop Taylor, "the more full of awfulness and fear, and modesty, and humility we shall be: and it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity with God, any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater also be the humility of the man."

Mr. Walsh left Bristol, and embarked for Ireland, April 13th. The passage was extremely dangerous, in-somuch that the mariners themselves expected to perish, and cried out vehemently, *We are not fit to die!* While God gave him, he says, more faith, and patience, and joy, than he ever had before. He prayed, and praised God incessantly. See the blessedness of believing on the Son of God!

He, however, arrived safe at Cork, on the Sunday following. His biographer, Mr. Morgan, observes, "Hearing of his arrival, I hastened to see him, and can never forget the idea which the first sight of him gave me, of a man in deep *fellowship with God*. We embraced each other with tears; after which, kneeling down, he prayed as to a *present* God indeed! With such melting and moving expressions, and reverential confidence, as surpassed all that I had known and admired in him before: and plainly discovered his having entered, since we parted, much farther into the *holiest of all*, by the *blood of Jesus*."

He had the judgment and advice of the best physicians wherever he came, who on the slightest intimation, offered their assistance with all cheerfulness, neither expecting nor desiring any other gratuity, than (as one of them once expressed) *the prayer of Mr. Walsh*. They

His sufferings and death.

generally agreed, that his disorder was brought on through excessive labour,—frequent and loud preaching, and intense application to study.

For the benefit of the air, he was taken to Limerick, but being nothing benefited by it, they according to his own inclination and desire, removed him to Dublin; from whence he removed to the palace of the Great King—the Paradise of God.

For some time previous to his departure hence, his state was not indeed joyous, but grievous. He drank of his Lord's cup of sorrow, and was in truth deeply baptized with his baptism. He was immersed in affliction's furnace, and plunged in the deepest waters.

“ His flesh chastised, with tort'ring pain
His soul, and sickness clave his bones ;
Keen anguish dwelt in every vein,
And sadly turn'd his breath to moans.
Sorrow was all his soul ; he scarce perceiv'd,
But by the pains he suffer'd that he liv'd.”

He was tempted, and sorely buffeted by the devil. The nature of his disorder exposed him to a degree of precipitancy and discomposure, which he was more than superior to while in better health. In short, so did the wisdom of God permit, that through the malice of Satan, the extreme violence of his disorder, and the concurrence of several other circumstances, this servant of God was brought to the utmost extremity of spiritual distress and anguish, consistently with keeping the faith: insomuch, that it was but a few degrees removed from despair.

“ His agonizing soul sweat blood,
With Christ he fainted on the tree,
And cry'd in death, My God, my God,
Ah ! Why hast thou forsaken me.”

Mr. Thomas Hanby.

His great soul lay thus as it were in ruins for some considerable time; and he poured out many a heavy groan from an oppressed heart. This continued till a little time before his complete and eternal deliverance: when the Lord once more shone upon the face of his soul; the beams of heavenly brightness dispersed the clouds, and the smiles of the divine countenance more than compensated for this night of sorrow. Just as Mr. Walsh was departing, he burst out in transport, and pronounced, in a dying voice, but with the joy of angels! "*He is come!—He is come!—My beloved is mine, and I am his!—His for ever!*" And thus he sweetly breathed out his soul into the hands of his beloved Saviour, on the 8th day of April, 1759, and in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

MR. THOMAS HANBY.

He was born at Carlisle, December 16, 1733, and was brought up at Barnard Castle. Both his parents died while he was very young. His relations put him to school for some years, and then to a trade. His first serious impressions were made when about six years of age. Looking up to heaven, he was struck with wonder, and exclaimed, *God Almighty!* But he was seized with horror, ran home, and shut the door. Some years after he was greatly alarmed by hearing his sister talk about the day of judgment, which he had not heard mentioned before. But these impressions wore off, and he began to be

"Rough in his manners, and untamed his mind."

Is confirmed by the bishop, and joins the Methodists.

When he was about thirteen years old, hearing the bishop was coming to confirm the children in the town where he lived, he thought some preparation was necessary. He applied to a relation, who taught him some prayers, and the church catechism, which he had forgotten, though he had been taught it at school. The sabbath came when the bishop was to confirm: and he having gone through his examination with the minister, had episcopal hands laid upon him. This was in the forenoon; and towards evening, he went with some of his companions into the fields, and played at their usual games. But before he went to bed, he was struck with horror, and thought he heard a voice say, "Thy confirmation is made void, for thou hast broken the sabbath." He knew not what to do, but thought he would try to make himself good, by reading and repeating many prayers. He continued in this state, till a poor shoe-maker from Leeds, who was a Methodist, having received the truth himself, was willing to impart it to others: not, indeed, by preaching, but by friendly discourse with his former acquaintances; for he was a native of Barnard Castle. A few were enlightened and began to meet together. Mr. Hanby was at first inclined to mock them, but was convinced that those despised, persecuted people, were able to shew him the way of salvation. He begged he might be permitted to meet with them, and his request was granted. And from that time he embraced every opportunity of meeting with them. However, after some time, his relation before mentioned, under the influence and direction of the minister of the parish, prevailed on Mr. Hanby to leave the Methodists. They formed a church society, which was soon larger than that of the Methodists. This society consisted of formal professors, who could play at cards, and conform to the world in almost every thing. However, as might be expected,

Mr. Thomas Hanby,

this society dwindled away, till only Mr. Hanby and his cousin remained of it. They both returned, and solicited re-admission among the Methodists. His cousin obtained the peace of God, and walked in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, till he died. Mr. Hanby was instant in prayer, till his weary, heavy laden spirit received remission of sins, and was filled with peace and joy in believing.

When he was about eighteen years of age, he spent a few months in Newcastle, and by constantly attending the preaching, night and morning, he was much profited and established. This induced him to visit Leeds, in hope of obtaining similar advantages, in which he was not disappointed. Meantime, his delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night.

About this time, a sudden impression was made upon his mind, that he must preach the Gospel. But he thought it to be only a temptation; and was the more reluctant to entertain the idea, from what he had seen the preachers suffer from violent persecuting mobs at Barnard Castle. For some time his mind was painfully exercised upon the subject. He was informed of a poor woman, a member of the society, who was dying, and who was said to be wonderfully happy. He desired a friend to take him to see her, and as they went, he prayed to the Lord to remove the load of painful exercise from his mind, and that if it was his will that he should preach, he would shew it to the dying saint he was going to visit, "Lord," said he, "thou canst as easily do this, as enable her to triumph over death. If thou wilt shew me a token, by which I may know thy will, then will I preach thy word wherever thou shalt please to send me." When he reached the house, as he was an entire stranger to the woman, and all the family, he stood at a distance. After

Preaches his first sermon at Bramley—is robbed by two soldiers.

some time he went out, and when he returned, was informed the dying woman had made much inquiry about the young man who had stood in the corner. He went to the side of her bed, and she looked him earnestly in the face, and said, "God has called you to preach the gospel; you have long rejected the call; but he will make you go; obey the call, obey the call." He now resolved to make a trial. He preached his first sermon at Bramley about four miles from Leeds, and again the same day at Armley. Immediately he was employed by the preachers, and soon after went into Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Derbyshire. He introduced Methodism at Ashbourn, and Burton-upon-Trent; and there, at Leek, and some other places, suffered much persecution, and very narrowly escaped being killed.

He says, "In weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in joy and sorrow, in weakness and trembling, were my days now spent. And I often thought, if God would excuse me from this hard task, how gladly should I embrace the life of a shoe-black, or of a shepherd's boy. I was surrounded with death, and could seldom expect to survive another day, because of the fury of the people. And yet it was, *Woe unto thee, if thou preach not the gospel.*"

In 1755, he was sent to Canterbury. It was about eight o'clock at night, when he got within sight of the lamps of the city; just then, two men with large pistols, rushed upon him, and demanded his money: he had only two shillings and eight pence; but they took this, and also his watch. But he believed that this robbery was permitted for good. At that time an invasion was expected from France: Canterbury was full of soldiers, and they were two soldiers who committed the robbery. The report of this, excited the curiosity of their comrades to come and hear the preacher who had been robbed,

Rev. John Fletcher,

And many of them were awakened out of the sleep of sin, and joined the society.

Several of the following years, he spent in Scotland. And he deemed this, in general, the happiest period of his life.

In this brief sketch of the history and character of this excellent man, it may be sufficient to say, that he was employed as an itinerant preacher for more than forty years; that in all this time his morals were unimpeachable; and that both as a Christian and a preacher, he was highly esteemed. He was a man of an excellent spirit; and eminently endowed with the meekness of wisdom. In matters of conscience, he displayed true Christian fortitude. He was chosen president of the conference held in Bristol, in the year 1794, and was the first person, after Mr. Wesley, who filled that office, that was called from the church militant to the church triumphant.

REV. JOHN FLETCHER.

The character of Mr. Fletcher has been given by Mr. Wesley, in a book written soon after his death. Afterwards, the Rev. Mr. Gilpin wrote some notes on his character, accompanied with his translation of Mr. Fletcher's Portrait of St. Paul. And lately, Mr. Benson has compiled a life of him, from all that had been published before, with much additional matter. He was, indeed, a most extraordinary man; a Christian *like him* the world has seldom seen; and a preacher, and especially a writer, whose transcendent excellencies my pen cannot fully describe. He was born at Nyon, in Switzerland, September 12, 1729, of an

Is ordained for the Ministry, and becomes Vicar of Madeley.

ancient and honourable family. He was ordained for the Christian ministry in 1757; was made vicar of Madeley, in Shropshire, in the year 1760; and died there August 14, 1785, where his name will be had in lasting remembrance.

At the conclusion of his account of this very eminent man, Mr. Wesley says, "I was intimately acquainted with him for thirty years. I conversed with him morning, noon, and night, without the least reserve, during a journey of many hundred miles: and, in all that time, I never heard him speak an improper word, or saw him do an improper action. Within fourscore years I have known many excellent men, holy in heart and life; but one equal to him I have not known. One so uniformly devoted to God, so unblameable a man in every respect I have not found, either in Europe or America. Nor do I expect to find such another on this side of eternity."

His death was suitable to his life. The Rev. Mr. Gilpin, vicar of Wrockwardine, a few miles from Madeley, gives some very interesting particulars respecting his dissolution, in the biographical notes, which he has added to Mr. Fletcher's "Portrait of St. Paul." "Equally prepared for every event, he met his last great trial with all that composure and steadiness, which had invariably distinguished him upon every former occasion of suffering. He entered the valley of the shadow of death, as one who feared no evil. He considered it as the high road to that incorruptible inheritance which is reserved for the saints; and looking forward with a hope full of immortality, he saw beyond its limited gloom, those everlasting hills of delight and glory, to which his soul aspired."

"A few days before his dissolution, he appeared to have reached that desirable point, where the last rapturous discoveries are made to the souls of dying saints."

Rev. John Fletcher,

Roused, as it were, with the shouts of angels, and kindled into rapture with visions of glory, he broke into a song of holy triumph, which began and ended with the praises of God's unfathomable love. He laboured to declare the secret manifestations he enjoyed, but his sensations were too powerful for utterance; and after looking inexpressible things, he contented himself with calling upon all around him, to celebrate and shout out that *adorable love*, which can never be fully comprehended, or adequately expressed.

"This triumphant frame of mind was not a transient feeling, but a state that he continued to enjoy, with little or no discernible intermission, to the moment of his death. While he possessed the power of speech, he spake as one whose lips had been touched with *a live coal from the altar*; and when deprived of that power, his countenance discovered that he was sweetly engaged in the contemplation of eternal things.

"On the day of his departure, as I was preparing to attend my own church, which was at the distance of nine miles from Madeley, I received a hasty message from Mrs. Fletcher, requesting my attendance at the vicarage. I instantly followed the messenger, and found Mr. Fletcher, with every symptom of approaching dissolution upon him. I had ever looked up to this man of God, with an extraordinary degree of affection and reverence; and, on this afflicting occasion, my heart was uncommonly afflicted and depressed. It was now in vain to recollect that public duty required my presence in another place: unfitted for every duty, except that of watching the bed of death, I found it impossible to withdraw myself from the solemn scene to which I had been summoned. I had received from this evangelical teacher, in days that were past, many excellent precepts with respect to *holy living*; and now I desired to receive from him the last important

Interesting scene in his last illness.

lesson with respect to *holy dying*. And truly this concluding lesson was of inestimable worth; since so much patience and resignation, so much peace and composure, were scarcely ever discovered in the same circumstances before. *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*

“While their pastor was breathing out his soul into the hands of a *faithful Creator*, his people were offering up their joint supplications on his behalf, in the house of God. Little however, was seen among them on this trying occasion, but affliction and tears. Indeed it was a day much to be remembered, for the many affecting testimonies which appeared on every side. The whole village wore an air of consternation and sadness: and not one joyful song was heard among all its inhabitants. —Hasty messengers were passing to and fro, with anxious inquiries and confused reports. And the members of every family sat together in silence that day, awaiting with trembling expectation the issue of every hour.

“After the conclusion of the evening service, several of the poor, who came from distant parts, and who were usually entertained under Mr. Fletcher’s roof, still lingered about the house, and seemed unable to bear themselves away from the place, without a sight of their expiring pastor. Secretly informed of their desire, I obtained for them the permission they wished. And the door of the chamber being set open, immediately before which Mr. Fletcher was sitting upright in his bed, with the curtains undrawn, unaltered in his usual venerable appearance; they slowly moved, one by one, along the gallery, severally pausing as they passed by the door, and casting in a look of mingled supplication and anguish. It was an affecting sight, to behold these unfeigned mourners successively presenting themselves before the

Rev. John Fletcher,

bed of their dying benefactor, with an inexpressible eagerness in their looks; and then dragging themselves away from his presence, with a distressing consciousness, *that they should see his face no more.*

“And now the hour speedily approached, that was to put a solemn termination to our hopes and fears. His weakness very perceptibly increased, but his countenance continued unaltered to the last. If there was any visible change in his feelings, he appeared to be more at ease, and more sweetly composed, as the moment of his dismissal drew near. Our eyes were rivetted upon him in awful expectation. But whatever we had felt before, no murmuring thought was suffered, at this interesting period, to darken the glories of so illustrious a scene. All was silence—when the last angelic messenger suddenly arrived, and performed his important commission, with so much stillness and secrecy, that it was impossible to determine the exact moment of its completion. Mrs. Fletcher was kneeling by the side of her departing husband; one who attended him with uncommon assiduity during the last stages of his disorder, sat at his head; while I sorrowfully waited near his feet. Uncertain whether or not he was totally separated from us, we pressed nearer, and hung over his bed in the attitude of listening attention:—his lips ceased to move, and his head was gently sinking on his bosom---we stretched out our hands; but his warfare was accomplished, and the happy spirit had taken its everlasting flight.”

In the same biographical notes, Mr. Gilpin has favoured the world with some very striking characteristic traits of Mr. Fletcher. He informs us, that he passed the earlier part of his life at Nyon, where, he soon discovered an elevated turn of mind, accompanied with an unusual degree of vivacity. After having made a good proficiency in school learning, he was sent to Geneva, where he was

His studies and early piety.

distinguished equally by his superior abilities and his uncommon application. The two first prizes, for which he stood candidate, he carried away from a number of competitors, several of whom were nearly related to the professors: and on these occasions he was complimented by his superiors in a very flattering manner. During his residence at Geneva, he allowed himself but little time, either for recreation, refreshment, or rest. Here he laid the foundation of that extensive and accurate knowledge, for which he was afterwards distinguished, both in philosophical and theological researches. After quitting Geneva, he was sent by his father to Lenzbourg, a small town in the Swiss Cantons, where he not only acquired the German language, but diligently prosecuted his other studies, for which he ever discovered a passionate attachment. On his return from this place, he continued some time at home, studying the Hebrew language, and perfecting his acquaintance with mathematical learning.

His early piety was equally remarkable. From his childhood he was impressed with a deep sense of the majesty of God, and a constant fear of offending him. His acquaintance with the scriptures guarded him, on the one hand, from the snares of infidelity; and preserved him, on the other, from many of the vices peculiar to youth. His conversation was modest, and his whole conduct marked with a degree of rectitude, not usually to be found in early life. He manifested an extraordinary turn for religious meditation; and those little productions which gained him the greatest applause, at this period, were chiefly of a religious tendency. His filial obedience, and brotherly affection, was exemplary; nor is it remembered, that he ever uttered one unbecoming expression in either of those characters. And he was a constant reprover of sin.

Rev. John Fletcher,

But notwithstanding all these external appearances of piety, Mr. Fletcher remained for many years in ignorance respecting the nature of scriptural Christianity. He was naturally of a high and ambitious turn of mind, and counted much upon the dignity of human nature, and being admired by his friends, it is not to be wondered at that he should cast a look of self-complacency upon himself. He was a stranger to that unfeigned sorrow for sin, which is the first step toward the kingdom of God. He had resided some time in England before he became properly acquainted with himself, and the nature of true religion. In the twenty-sixth year of his age, he was so filled with self-abhorrence, as to place himself on a level with the chief of sinners. But his sorrow for sin was succeeded by a consciousness of the favour of God, and he was filled with peace and joy in believing. Having found Jesus to be a Saviour, he determined to follow him as a guide. From this period he became truly exemplary for Christian piety. He appeared to enjoy uninterrupted fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Every day was with him a day of solemn self-dedication, and every hour an hour of praise and prayer.

Mr. Fletcher seemed to be familiar with *things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. He *walked as seeing him who is invisible, and sat in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. To those who were much conversant with him, he appeared almost as an inhabitant of a better world; the common lights of Christians were eclipsed before him; and even his religious friends could never stand in his presence, without being overwhelmed with a consciousness of their own inferiority. While they saw him rising, as it were, on the wings of an eagle, they were humbled at their inability to pursue his flight; and his frequent expressions of fervent love and gratitude to God, made them ashamed of their own lukewarmness and ingratitude.

Reverenced as an angel of God—his Epitaph.

When he went out through the city, or took his seat in the company of the righteous, he was saluted with unusual reverence, as an angel of God. The young men saw him and hid themselves; and the aged arose and stood up. Even those who were honoured as princes among the people of God, refrained talking, and laid their hand upon their mouth. When the ear heard him, then it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness to him. Sitting in the house, or walking by the way; in retirement, or in his public labours, he was uniformly actuated by the same spirit. In all he said and did, in all the circumstances of life, it appeared that his heart and his treasure were in heaven.

His Epitaph.

Here lies the Body of
The Rev. JOHN WILLIAM de la FLETCHER,
 Vicar of Madeley,
 Who was born at Nyon, in Switzerland,
 September the 12th, 1729,
 And finished his Course, August the 14th, 1785,
 In this Village;
 Where his unexampled Labours
 Will long be remembered.
 He exercised his Ministry for the space of
 Twenty-five Years,
 In this Parish,
 With uncommon Zeal and Ability.
 Many believed his Report, and became
 His Joy and Crown of Rejoicing;
 While others constrained him to take up
 The Lamentation of the Prophet,
 “All the day long have I stretched out my Hands
 Unto a disobedient and gainsaying People:
 Yet Surely my Judgment is with the Lord,
 And my Work with my God.”
 “He being dead yet speaketh.”

Rev. John Fletcher,

About twelve years after the death of Mr. Fletcher, the author of this work spent two years in Madeley and its vicinity ; and found his name as ointment poured forth. Every thing that relates to Mr. Fletcher being interesting, he may be excused in adding a few remarks which have never been published before, having received his information from living witnesses.

Some of the Methodists at Coalbrook-Dale told me, that their chapel was enlarged a little before Mr. Fletcher's death. The morning they began to get the stones for the enlargement, he came by the quarry just as they were beginning to work. He *would* have the honour of doing something in this business of enlarging the house of prayer. "But first," said he, "let us pray." So they all kneeled down upon the rock ; Mr. Fletcher prayed like himself ; and then he assisted them in getting stones, till more urgent concerns called him to depart.

I was also very credibly informed, at Broseley, about three miles from Madeley, that about the time Mr. Fletcher was writing his Checks to Antinomianism, the Baptist minister of that town, declared in the pulpit, he would go over to Madeley, to this great Arminian, and confound him by argument. He went accordingly to Mr. Fletcher's house, and told him his errand. Mr. Fletcher did not decline the combat, but only proposed they should first have a little prayer. After prayer, the argumentation commenced and proceeded ; and Mr. Fletcher not only maintained his ground, but made a considerable impression on his heroic assailant. What with his matchless piety, his loving and amiable spirit and temper, and the strength and clearness of his arguments, he made a breach in the wall of this Calvinian fortress. The minister returned home, full of admiration, and the praises of Mr. Fletcher ; and was never after-

Anecdote of a gentleman farmer—Account of Mrs. Fletcher.

wards able so to preach as to satisfy his Calvinistic auditors, that he remained orthodox.

The following anecdote I had from the best authority, and knew the surviving branches of the family.—One Sunday, after the morning service, Mr.——, a gentleman farmer, insulted Mr. Fletcher very grossly, as he came out of the church, evincing great enmity against a faithful ministry and genuine piety. Before Mr. Fletcher concluded his sermon in the afternoon, he told the congregation, he had a powerful impression upon his mind, that before the next Sabbath the Lord would display a signal mark of his displeasure against the enemies of his cause and truth. The week drew almost to a conclusion, and nothing remarkable happened. But, on the Saturday evening, Mr.—— returning from the market, in a state he should not have been in, fell from his horse, and instantly expired upon the spot. This anecdote was kept back from publication out of tenderness to the family. But it does not appear to me that there is any *sufficient* reason for suppressing for ever, such a notable instance of God's displeasure against the opposers of his truth, and of Mr. Fletcher's prophetic spirit.

Since Mr. Fletcher's death, that most excellent woman, his widow, has been astonishingly useful in carrying on the good work, so happily begun in his days. I formed a very high idea of her piety. Her religion is human nature cured and elevated. She has strong sense, and an easy, natural, and almost irresistible method of drawing up the minds of all about her to heaven and heavenly things. She has, for many years, been the great counsellor and director of the parish of Madeley; and that frequently as well in temporals as spirituals. In short, ever since Mr. Fletcher's death, she has been little less than the vicar of the parish. She has never quitted the

Mr. Alexander Mather,

vicarage-house, though she pays an annual rent for it; and the vicar will, I believe, employ or dismiss any curate at her request.

MR. ALEXANDER MATHER.

This truly great man, and eminent servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, was a native of North-Britain. He was born at Brechin, in the year 1733. His parents being religious, he was early instructed in divine things, and trained up in the fear of the Lord. When only ten years of age his mind was sensibly affected with everlasting things; at that early period he had deep convictions of his fallen state in Adam, and was brought into great distress of soul. But though these sentiments were never wholly obliterated, yet they were, (as is too often the case) but as the *morning cloud, or the early dew which soon passeth away*.

In the year 1752, he left his native country and came to London; where, in the following year, he married. He then remembered that the *vows of God were upon him*; and that he had often promised the Lord, that when he entered into the conjugal state, he would then devote himself unreservedly to his service. His convictions returned by reflection, and he began to seek the Lord with all his heart, and all his soul. His distress was so great, to use his own words, as to say, "My appetite was gone, my sleep departed from me, my bones were filled as with a sore disease, and my tears were my meat day and night." He used frequently to go on his knees at bed-time, and continued in that position with *strong cries and tears* till two o'clock in the morning; at which hour he was accustomed to go to his daily labour. His

His conversion, and call to the ministry.

earnest prayers were not in vain: the Lord regarded the cry of his own Spirit in his heart, and under the first sermon which he heard from the Rev. John Wesley, the Lord revealed his pardoning mercy to his soul, and he was instantaneously translated from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This was on the 14th of April, 1754. Mr. Mather's own account of this blessed change is as follows: "Under that sermon God set my heart at liberty, removing my sins from me as far as the East is from the West: which the very change of my countenance testified, before my tongue could utter it. I had no great transport of joy; but my load was gone, and I could praise God from the ground of my heart: all my sorrow, and fear, and anguish of spirit, being changed into a solid peace."

As Mr. Mather, at that period, appeared to be possessed of abilities for the edification of the church, Mr. Wesley soon took notice of him, and first employed him as a leader of a band, then of a class: which offices he filled to the glory of God, and the profit of the souls committed to his care. Soon after he felt a secret, yet powerful conviction that God had called him to preach his Gospel. He sought the Lord by fasting and prayer, that he might know what was his will concerning him in this matter. He then mentioned the case to Mr. Wesley, who told him plainly, "To be a Methodist Preacher is not the way to ease, honour, pleasure, or profit. It is a life of much labour and reproach. They often fare hard, are often in want. They are liable to be stoned, beaten and abused in various manners. Consider this before you engage in so uncomfortable a way of life!" Mr. Mather replied, "He had no desire to engage therein, unless it was the call of God; and he was regardless as to what he suffered in doing the will of God."

Mr. Wesley then encouraged him to make trial, which

Mr. Alexander Mather,

he did at the chapel in Snow's-fields, in the Borough of Southwark. His labours were accepted; and the Lord himself bore witness to the word of his servant.

As Mr. Wesley was fully satisfied with Mr. Mather's call to the ministry, at the Conference 1757, he was received as an itinerant preacher; and on August 15th, set out for his first circuit, Epworth, in Lincolnshire. He now, like a true soldier of Jesus Christ, entered the field of battle: he fought valiantly under the banner of his Divine Master, and being girded by the strength of Omnipotence, put the armies of the aliens to flight. He suffered much, at that early period of the work, from wicked and unreasonable men; but his labours were every where crowned with success, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered abundantly in his hands.

It would far exceed my limits to enter minutely into the extensive labours of this truly apostolic man. Perhaps, if ever those words could be applied to any man besides the Apostle, Mr. Wesley, and Mr. Whitefield, they might to Mr. Mather, *I laboured more abundantly than they all. In labours more abundant.* He was a strong man, and possessed what some have termed an iron constitution; but he put forth all his strength, and exerted himself to the uttermost, in what he supposed to be the best of causes,—the cause of God. The interest of Methodism, especially, lay near his heart, and for the permanent support of its doctrines and discipline, he was literally lavish of life. As a man, he possessed a very great mind. He had a strong natural understanding, which he had greatly improved. Had he enjoyed the advantages of a classical education, there is no doubt but he would have shone in the senate, or at the bar. But he principally applied himself to those studies which were best calculated to answer the end of his high and holy calling. He was well read in the Holy Scriptures,

His attainments and qualifications for the ministry.

he daily meditated in the Divine Law, and treasured up the sacred word in his heart. He closely studied human nature, and had obtained as great a knowledge of the heart of man, in its degenerate state, or as renewed by grace, as most men ever did. He had acquired a very considerable degree of what is properly called common sense, which qualified him to enter into all the important affairs of the Church: his knowledge of men and things, and of whatever concerned the good of either civil or religious society, was very extensive; and he was, therefore, very frequently employed in adjusting the most difficult affairs, which from time to time occurred in the connexion to which he belonged. This certainly exposed him to the censure of many, and a number of invidious reflections were cast upon him; but commending himself to God, and to his own conscience in the sight of God, he endured the contradiction of these men, with that patience and fortitude of mind, which became one who knew in whom he trusted, in whose service he was engaged, and who would judge his conduct in righteousness at the last!

As a Christian, his experience of divine things was deep and clear: he was brought under serious impressions early in life, and had enjoyed a clear sense of the love of God to his soul for above forty years!

As a friend, he was affectionate, sympathetic and faithful. He was ever ready to assist, in the most difficult cases, any one who desired his help; and exerted himself to the uttermost in serving the interests of his fellow-creatures. The poor particularly lay near his heart: he sought out those retreats of wretchedness,

“Where hopeless anguish pours his groan,
And lonely want retires to die.”

Mr. Alexander Mather,

But when we view him as a Minister of the Gospel, he was surely a burning and shining light. The Lord had enriched him with extraordinary spiritual gifts, and had qualified him for extensive usefulness in his Church. His preaching was peculiarly instructive and very forcible and impressive. His knowledge of the scriptures was extensive, his judgment sound and clear, his apprehension quick, his genius fertile, and his memory retentive. He had a considerable degree of holy zeal for the honor of God, and the salvation of precious souls, which, after labouring in the vineyard indefatigably for forty-three years, was not in the least abated! His last circuit was London, where for near two years, though labouring under the painful disorder which put a period to his life and labours, he put forth all his strength, and was frequently a wonder to many. His labours, in most parts of the kingdom, were greatly owned of God: he was instrumental in turning many to righteousness, and also of building up the saints on their most holy faith.

In the spring of the year 1800, his disorder seemed to baffle the skill of the ablest physicians, and to defy the power of medicine. In the month of June, being no longer able to do any thing publicly or privately for that cause, in which his whole heart had been so long engaged, it was proposed that he should retire to York; and hopes were entertained, if he could bear the journey, that the change of air might at least prolong his days, if not produce a radical cure. But the hopes of his friends proved abortive! He bore the fatigues of travelling as well as could be expected, but on his arrival, he grew weaker, and weaker, till the silver cord was loosed, and the wheel broken at the cistern.

Soon after his arrival at York, Mr. Pawson and Mr. Benson went to see him. The interview was truly

His views of himself in his last illness.

affecting: as soon as he could speak, he said, "All I have done is nothing:—it is not worth mentioning. I have no foundation of hope and confidence whatever, but the mediation of the Son of God.—O! my dear friends, I never saw the blessed Redeemer of mankind in so amiable a light as I do now. Never did I see so clearly, or feel so deeply my need of him, and that I am wholly indebted to his sacrifice and intercession, for the acceptance of my person, and of my poor services. What would become of me were it not for this Redeemer?"

A pious friend, who was much with him, gives the following account of the Lord's dealings with him towards the close of his life.

"On Saturday, August 16th, Mr. Mather said, "What I told you when you first visited me after I came to York, I still feel to be a truth, viz. I have no where to look, nor on any thing else to depend for salvation, but CHRIST, and my confidence in HIM IS AS FIRM AS A ROCK. My faith has frequently been assaulted during my affliction, in an unusual manner; but it has never shrunk in the least degree! I feel a blessed evidence of my acceptance, and a sacred sense of the presence of God with me always."

On another occasion he said, "How comfortable are those words: *Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. God so loved us that he gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. There is no other name—no other Redeemer—on HIM my soul relies. Mine is a hope of more than forty years, it cannot easily be shaken.*"

On Monday the 18th, being in extreme anguish, he said, "I long to be gone; but *I am happy in God.*" After pausing a little he said, "I am happy in Jesus, but my sufferings are great."

Mr. Alexander Mather,

" Rivers of life divine I see
And trees of Paradise."

O let me be there; I'll be there, there, there! O that
it might be this night; O hide me among those trees!
Here may I have an abiding place!

" 'Tis there with the lambs of thy flock,
There only I cover to rest."

But if I may not have the privilege, the happiness, the
honor of being with thee this night, may I be resigned
to thy will. O that exercise of praise and thanksgiving!
It has been the delight of my soul, my chief exercise
upon earth. I have loved thy word, thy law, thy people,
and I love them still.

" Let it not my Lord displease,
That I would die to be his guest."

Jesus answers, "*Thou art all fair, my love, there is
no spot in thee. Arise my love, my fair one, and come
away.*"

Again, when in extreme pain and anguish, he most
affectingly cried out, "*O God my heart is broken within
me! Why are thy chariot wheels so long in coming!
Lord grant me patience.*" And then, as if his prayer
was immediately answered, calmly said,

" To patient faith the prize is sure,
And all who to the end endure
The cross, shall wear the crown."

On Wednesday the 20th, after a night of inexpressible
suffering, he slumbered, and was composed a little.
When he awoke, he seemed surprised to find himself

His comfortable and happy death.

still in the body; and said, "Why did you call me back? I have been in Paradise. As surely as I shall go there again, I have been in heaven this morning." Then, after taking leave of, and giving his dying advice to his family, he turned to Mrs. Mather and said, "As for you, my dear, I can say nothing to you that I have not said already;" but, pointing to the Bible, he said, "That book is your's, and the AUTHOR of it!"

On Friday, August 22, about two hours before he died, and nearly the last words he spoke, he said, "I now know that I have not sought Thee in vain. I have not, I have not. And afterwards he exclaimed, "O thou that caused light to shine out of darkness, shine upon my soul with the light of the knowledge of the Son of God; that name above every name, for ever dear: it dispels all my fears. O proclaim, proclaim Jesus! Tell me, shall I be with him to-night?" On being answered, Yes, there is no doubt of it, he cried out, "He whom I have served for near fifty years will not forsake me now, GLORY BE TO GOD AND THE LAMB FOR EVER AND EVER. Amen and Amen."

Soon after this his voice failed, and he said but little that could be understood; but by the motion of his lips, he appeared engaged in silent ejaculations, till seeming to fall into a sweet slumber, he silently and almost imperceptibly breathed his soul into the hands of his blessed Redeemer, whom he had most ardently loved, and faithfully served for near fifty years, about four o'clock in the afternoon, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and in the forty-third of his itinerancy.

Mr. John Pawson.

MR. JOHN PAWSON.

Mr. Pawson held a considerable rank of usefulness and influence in the Methodist connexion, which justly entitles him to some notice in this work. His father was a respectable farmer of Thorner, who cultivated his own estate. He had two sons, Marmaduke, and John, the subject of this memoir, who was born on the 12th of November 1737. The former succeeded his father on the estate, the latter was called to the ministry.

John, at the age of fifteen, was sent to Hull to learn the profession of an architect. Here he became thoughtful about divine things, loved retirement, and met in the vestry of the high church, with a small society of well-disposed people, formed somewhat after the plan of Dr. Woodward's societies in London, about the year 1670.

He now thought himself one of the better sort of Christians; though as yet he was not awakened to see the sinfulness of his heart, and the necessity of regeneration. Against the Methodists, he was so prejudiced by report, as not to feel the least desire to hear them.

About the year 1758, Mr. Crook, curate of Hunslet, published two sermons, the first on Isa. xxix. 2. which was very much spoken against: "The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed," &c. In these sermons, he proved that the scriptures, without the aid of divine illumination, are a sealed book both to the learned and the unlearned. As Mr. Crook proved that we prayed for these things in the church, Mr. Pawson saw that he had been praying for things he did not believe, which greatly humbled him before the Lord.

In June, the same year, he incidentally went one evening to Otley, and heard Mr. James Oddie, a travelling preacher of great abilities. The text was, "Be it known

His prejudices against the Methodists removed.

unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," &c. *Acts* xiii. 38, 39. Here the gravity of the preacher, the strength of the arguments, and the power of the word, connected with the seriousness of the people, removed his prejudices and made a lasting impression on his heart. Early Methodism affords a thousand instances of well-disposed people being convinced the first time they heard the truth, and of the change of prejudice to inviolable attachment, the moment they were undeceived.

From this time, he associated with a few scattered Methodists in his neighbourhood, which proved a sore trial to his parents. His uncle cut him off from a promised legacy, and his father told him that after his death, he meant to turn his house into a preaching-house; but would take care he never should. However, the good old man, eventually getting his eyes opened, prevented the son from doing this, by doing it himself; which house to the present period has been open to the preachers.

His brother Marmaduke, presently began to be serious too. They really were two grand looking brothers, rather tall and well made. Hence the attachment of their parents was strong, and their feelings, for a while, were severely harrowed at the idea of the disgrace which their sons would incur: but the old man's prejudices were much removed by reading Mr. Wesley's sermons, and from that period he was drawn to hear the preachers.

Mr. Pawson's distress on account of sin, and for want of a sense of acceptance with God, was very great. At this time, there was a considerable revival of religion in the adjacent villages. The instances of persons who had found peace with God, greatly encouraged him to persevere. He sought the Lord as though there had been no person on earth who wanted salvation but himself. He went from one means of grace to another, weary and

Mr. John Pawson,

heavy laden; yet in full expectation of a blessing. Sometimes he thought it near, and was ready to lay hold of it, but unbelief and fear intervened. Sometimes he felt drawings of the Divine goodness, but could not retain them.

But the day is sure to dawn on those that watch for the morning. He went with his father and others to hear Mr. Hosmer, at Bardsey. The text was *Isa. xli. 10.* "Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." These words came with power to the father's mind, and he found peace with God before the son.

The preacher finding many persons in distress, appointed a prayer-meeting. This young man was among the number, and continued on his knees in the greatest distress. But the conflict ended in a calm. God spoke peace to his soul, and with the gracious promise, "Thou art mine." His deliverance was so clear and strong, and his heart was so filled with love, that he could not doubt of the work; though prior to the change, he had been peculiarly exercised with reasonings.

From the time that he found salvation for his own soul, he felt, as is mostly the case with persons called to great usefulness, an intense desire for the salvation of others. He began to hold prayer-meetings, to exhort, and ultimately to preach. Thus in the primitive way the Lord prepared him for his own work.

In August 1762, he was appointed for the York circuit; and continued in the harness for almost forty and four years, when the Lord took him home to himself. His ministry was mostly exercised in the larger towns of Great Britain, though often in his earlier years, connected with extensive circuits. And the whole of his character demonstrates him to be one of the most upright of the human

An extract from his journal.

kind, and the most useful of ministers. His personal and family piety, his charitable disposition, his unceasing care of the Lord's work, rank him high among ministers who might surpass him in abilities for the pulpit.

He kept a journal of his own experience, connected with remarks on men and things relating to Methodism. On his return from the Bristol Conference in 1804, he wrote as follows:

“ I am now entered upon my 43d year as a travelling preacher. Well may I stand astonished at the wonderful goodness and mercy of God to me. I know of no one among all that I have been acquainted with, that has been so highly favoured with health as I have been. O how shall I sufficiently praise the Lord for his unmerited mercy. I would be thankful, and would express my gratitude, not in words only, but also in humble and constant obedience to his will, whose I am; and to whom I am deeply indebted for ten thousand times ten thousand mercies.

“ The searcher of hearts knows that I would serve him in my generation in that way, and to that degree which he himself would have me. I would say from the ground of my heart, Lord here am I, thy willing servant; do with me what thou wilt, employ me where and as thou wilt, only be thou present with me; let thine abundant blessing attend me; be thou right precious to me; and, for the glory of thy name make my way prosperous. The longer I live in the world, the more clearly I see the truth of the following words: ‘ The help that is done upon earth, the Lord doth it himself.’ And therefore would give up myself wholly to him, that he may be all in all to me.

“ If this be the last year of my life, as it probably will be, may it be the happiest and most useful; and may I be fully ready whensoever the Lord may call for me. O my God, let me finish well, as many of my friends and bre-

Mr. John Pawson,

thren have done. Be present with me, O my gracious Redeemer in my last moments, and let me die on thy loving bosom; let me fall asleep in thy gracious arms; and let me live with thee for ever. Amen."

I cannot be sufficiently thankful, adds he, that the Lord continues to me the invaluable partner of my life, that he still continues to bless her with a good degree of health and strength; and more especially as he not only makes her a blessing to me; but also very useful in his church. For such a help-meet I surely have infinite cause to thank God. Thus did he record the Lord's gracious conduct towards him.

At the Conference in 1805, Mr. Pawson was appointed to exercise his ministry in Wakefield and its vicinity. He soon appeared at his post, on which occasion, we find in his papers the following observations:

"The Wakefield friends had requested me to spend a year with them. I found my mind much drawn that way. I trust my eye was single in complying with their request. So far as I could judge, there was a probability of my being as useful there as any where else, and I was led to think as I am growing old, if it should please God to call me hence the present or the next year, my friends would be but at little trouble or expence in taking me to Thorner, where I might sleep with my fathers, which I greatly desire, if it should please the Lord so to favour me. I am now in my 68th year, and various bodily infirmities are come upon me; yet through the unbounded goodness of God, I am able to fulfil the duties of my station at present. How long that may be the case with me God only knows: but I am in his hand, at his disposal. Let him do with me as seemeth him good. I cannot choose, and he cannot err. He is infinitely wise in all his ways, and holy in all his works. I thankfully acknowledge that my life has been a life of mercy. From my earliest days,

Reflections on the goodness of God.

the goodness of God has abounded towards me. He has been the guide of my youth; the strength and stay, the comfort and happiness of my riper years; and now, when I am old and grey-headed, he does not, and, I trust he never will, forsake me. I can say on good ground, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise." And he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Having this gracious promise to rely upon, may I not in the deepest humility and self-abasement say, "Lord, I will never leave, nor forsake thee." And why should I? I know by long and happy experience that he has the words of eternal life! My mind has often been much affected by the words of our blessed Lord to his disciples, a little before his agony in the garden, "Ye are they who have continued with me in my temptations." They had not turned their backs upon him as too many had done. O that I, like them, may continue with my gracious Lord in his temptation! May I be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Whatsoever storms or tempests rise, till he shall sign my happy release, and say to me, "Come up hither, and take thy seat with me. Amen."

Let us now attend the man of God through that interesting scene at the close of which his labour and sufferings were terminated.

Unaccustomed to complain, even when indisposed, he went on in his work with his usual life and animation; himself alone acquainted with his growing infirmities. At length, however, the time arrived when he could no longer perform the duties of his station.

On this occasion he wrote to Mr. Entwisle, in a manner extremely affecting. For many years, (observes Mr. Entwisle,) I had been favoured with his friendship. He wrote to me as one to whom he could unbosom his whole soul. The original I preserve, as a precious memorial of a de-

Mr. John Pawson,

parted friend and relative. An extract I am persuaded, will be interesting to all who knew him. It is dated February 5, 1806.

“ It is impossible for me to tell you what I have suffered, and what I still suffer from the tender hand of an infinitely wise and gracious God, who is my father and unchangeable God. But I must give up, however desirous I am to write to you; for I cannot spell aright: no; it is all blunder upon blunder. I am a very poor creature indeed! But the goodness of God to me has been indescribable. O the mighty power of God, which he has manifested to me in this illness! All that I have been favoured with of the divine goodness through the whole course of my life, is nothing to what he has communicated to me under this painful dispensation of his providence. O how far from any degree of the fear of death, or the grave. My God is with me, powerfully and blessedly with me. That is all I can say, and I must give it up.”

On February 23d, he wrote again as follows:

“ Where shall I begin to tell of the loving kindness of an infinitely kind and gracious God, extended to a poor weak and helpless worm.

“ O for this love let rocks and hills,

“ Their lasting silence break,

“ And all harmonious (mine in particular) human tongues,

“ Their Saviour's praises speak.”

O yes, my Saviour's praises speak.

“ The pain and sickness I have been called to pass through, I cannot describe. Human language falls far too short. But the sweet peace, the heavenly tranquillity, the holy delight, and heavenly joy which my precious Saviour communicated to my soul, far, very far, exceeds all description! This day fortnight; O, with what rapture, with what supreme delight did I view my heavenly inhe-

Extract from one of his letters, describing his state of mind.

ritance. My soul mounted up to the throne of God, my altogether lovely Saviour. The kingdom of immortal glory; the holy, happy spirits I saw worshipping at our Emmanuel's feet, all ready to bid me welcome. In short, heaven itself surrounded me. My beloved brother seemed standing at my bed's feet. Nothing but my poor, weeping wife, and a poor thin vail of flesh and blood seemed to stand in my way. No, glory to God in the highest. No clouds, no doubts, no fears. No; all was quietness, peace, and assurance for ever.

"Last Sunday I was very ill indeed. I said to the Doctor, you know, sir, that from the beginning I have had no wish to recover; and now I have no hope. I believe I shall die, and it would give me inexpressible pleasure to hear you say that you have no hope. He then honestly told me that he had little hope, or rather none at all. Since then I have gained a little strength. But what shall I say, I am as weak almost as I can be, I assure you. This, perhaps, will be the last letter I shall ever write. Well, be it so, I can hold out no more. I am quite done for. Ten thousand blessings attend you and your's. Amen."

Those only who visited him can form an adequate conception of the feeling and emphasis with which he spoke. His friend, Mr. John Pipe, observes concerning one of his visits: "When I entered the room where he lay rejoicing in God, he told me that he had been exceeding ill. But that when his pain was greatest he was caught, as it were, to the very throne of God; and blest to that degree that he could have shouted aloud! and the Lord, said he, gave me the fullest assurance that what I had been preaching so long was according to his truth: especially the doctrines of the witness of the Spirit and entire sanctification."

"Many things of a like nature, adds Mr. Pipe, passed be-

Mr. John Pawson,

tween us, and when I knelt down to pray, the divine presence indeed overshadowed us, and we were much refreshed."

Never shall I forget, says Mr. Entwisle, the solemnity of my visit to Mr. Pawson. On my entrance into the room, he *looked unutterable things*, clasped my hand, and said, 'I am glad to see you, I am very glad to see you, I am EXCEEDING glad to see you—ten thousand blessings rest on you and yours.' He then proceeded, 'You know how God has represented himself in his holy word as a God of infinite mercy and love, &c. speaking largely of the divine character, perfections, and promises. 'Now,' said he in a manner peculiarly emphatical, 'ALL THAT IS MADE GOOD TO ME!' This was on the 5th of March. After spending a week with him, I returned to London; hoping to see him again, as the symptoms were so favourable as to afford ground of hope that his life might be prolonged for some time.

The parting was very affecting; another change took place soon after, and I saw his face no more.

I shall now conclude this memoir by a quotation from a funeral sermon preached on the occasion of Mr. Pawson's death, by Mr. Henry Moore:

"On the 3d of February, 1806, he preached at Wakefield, from Mark iii. 35.—*Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.* He had for some time complained of indisposition, and now expressed himself as incapable of further labour in the ministry. On Thursday the 6th of February, he was for the first time confined to his room, being attacked by an inflammation in the bowels. From this period, he appeared to be fast approaching to the grave; this was to him a source of consolation, and he frequently declared, that when his pain was most acute, his confidence in God was strongest.

Interesting particulars in his last illness.

“ On Tuesday the 25th, to the astonishment of all, he came down stairs without assistance, and with uncommon earnestness, exhorted those Ministers who were present, to insist especially on the necessity of enjoying the Witness of the Spirit, and holiness of heart, and then declared that the only foundation of his hope was, the infinite merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the same day, he said to those around, ‘ All will be well soon ; I can speak of my funeral as cheerfully as of my wedding.’ In a conversation he had with a friend, on the necessity of doing all things to the glory of God ; he declared, that he had never purchased a single article since his conversion, but with an eye to eternity, and said, I have nothing to do—all is ready.

“ On Wednesday 26th, when several friends were present, after expressing in the most elevated and forcible language, his glorious prospects into eternity, he began to pray with the utmost fervency ; for the Conference, that they might abide by their original doctrines ; also, in a most affecting manner, for his partner, that the Lord would enable her cheerfully to resign him into his hands, and he assured her, that while she lived, her Maker would be her husband, and that He would support her through the same trying scene. He then prayed for every individual present, and though exceedingly weak, he after this, at the request of Mrs. Pawson, with perfect recollection and presence of mind, baptized a child belonging to a particular friend : this was an affecting sight, and a most solemn season.

“ On Thursday the 27th, to Mr. Smith, from Birstal, he said—‘ Give my love to the Congregation, and tell them, I am going to my precious Saviour—the heaven of heavens is open to my view—I have nothing on my mind—I have nothing to do but die—I have long been sailing to this heavenly haven—sometimes the seas have been

Mr. John Pawson,

rough and tempestuous—Satan has often tried to raise a storm, if possible, to upset my little barge; but this he could not effect. No, no—now Satan hath no business with me—he appears to have quitted the field, and given it up as a lost case.’ At another time, he spoke to this effect.—‘All the powers of darkness will never be able to extinguish the flame of Divine Love that burns within.’ Soon afterwards he said, ‘It is enough, Christ died for me—I am mounting to the throne of God; where would you have me go?’ Then he broke out into the most rapturous strains of praise, and clasping his hands, said, ‘I know I am dying, but my death-bed is a bed of roses—I have no thorns planted upon my dying pillow.’

“On Friday 28th, being told that he would weary himself by speaking too much, he exclaimed, ‘I spend my breath as freely as I received it.’ One of his friends reminding him, that he had not now to seek the Lord, he replied, ‘No—I have not to seek the Lord, nor has he to seek me.’ Some wine and water being offered to him, he (though scarcely able) took it into his own hand, and then, in the most solemn and affecting manner, administered to himself the Sacrament—this was indeed a blessed and profitable season to all present.

“Saturday, March 1st. About one o’clock this morning, he spoke of death with the greatest cheerfulness; and feeling his pulse, wondered that he (meaning death) should delay his coming—‘I have no dread, said he, all is prepared—Death is welcome.’ A few hours after this, he again committed his partner into the hands of God, telling her as before, she would soon follow, and that the Lord would be her refuge and strength. Feeling himself exceedingly weak, he said, ‘I am on the verge of eternity, and with his utmost remaining strength exclaimed, *Victory! Victory! Victory!* through the *Blood of the Lamb*; let my soul take its everlasting flight.’ After

Rejoices in prospect of a blissful eternity.

this he sung the following verse, from one of his favourite hymns:

O could we make these doubts remove,
These gloomy doubts that rise;
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unbecclouded eyes.

“Doubts! gloomy doubts! Where are they? I know nothing of gloomy doubts, I have none—where are they gone?” A friend replied, I suppose they are fallen at the foot of the cross, where Bunyan’s Pilgrim lost his burden, Oh! said our reverend father, but I am now upon the delectable mountains, and with the shepherd’s spying glass, I view the heavenly country.

“At this time there appeared a favourable change in his complaint, which continued about ten days, during which period, through extreme debility, he was incapable of speaking much, but what he said was strongly expressive of his happy state. I have, said he, at one time, no pain, sickness, or sorrow, nor a wish to live or die—All is well. Yes, said he, exerting himself—Heaven already is begun, everlasting life is won, is won, is won!—I die a safe, easy, happy death—Thou my God art present, I feel thou art—Precious Jesus—Glory, glory, be to God! *It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who ever liveth to make intercession for us! What shall separate us from the love of Christ?*

“Sunday 16. Having passed through a very painful night, he thought two more such would carry him off, but he said, All is well, my life is hid with Christ in God, and you my dear partner will soon follow me. He then, with energy, spoke the following lines:

Mr. John Pawson.

Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying.

“Monday 17. Being asked if he wanted any thing, he replied, I want nothing but more and more of my blessed Jesus, and death.—Thanks be to God, Christ is mine—I am dying, but I shall live for ever. *Christ is all in all* to me—Death is indeed desirable, but *all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.* One present said, you will have a blessed change—Yes, said he, I know I shall. To one who came to see him, he said, My kind friend, I am drawing fast to a conclusion—Oh! my Jesus, 'tis all light and glory—I am completely happy, completely happy.

“On Tuesday the 18th, suffering much from difficulty of breathing, he said, Dying work is hard work; but now that my strength fails, God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever, yes for ever and ever. Christ is my Saviour, my all! Help me to render unto thee, the praise so justly due to thy excellent name for the support I feel! thou dost not suffer me to faint—No—

From Zion's top the breezes blow,
Refreshing all the vales below.

“Early on Wednesday morning, he lifted up his hands and eyes toward heaven, and said, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And in a short space exclaimed, My God! my God! my God! These were the last words he distinctly uttered; he was now incapable of speaking, and sunk very fast; but was perfectly sensible to the end. He died about twenty minutes past nine o'clock in the morning, apparently without any struggle or pain; leaving a most glorious testimony that he was gone to be for ever with the Lord.”

Thomas Webb, Esq.—becomes acquainted with the Methodists.

THOMAS WEBB, ESQ.

Was a principal instrument of introducing Methodism into North America; he was not a travelling preacher, but a military officer, and well known by the name of Captain Webb. In the campaign of 1758, in which General Wolfe conquered Quebec, and lost his life, Captain Webb received a wound in his arm, and lost his right eye. In consequence of these wounds and services, he retired on the full pay of a captain. Religion had no place in his heart at this time; but in 1764, he was enlightened to see that he was *a sinner*: and so great a sinner, that he almost despaired of mercy. In 1765, the Lord brought him out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, and established his goings. Yea, he put a new song into his mouth even of praise and thanksgiving to God. During this period, he had no director but the Lord. However, quickly afterwards he became acquainted with Mr. Roquet, an evangelical minister in the established church, and through him, with the Methodists, when he soon resolved, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God."

The first time he appeared as a public speaker, was in Bath. The preacher who was expected, not coming, he was desired to speak a little to the congregation. He dwelt chiefly upon his own experience; and the people were satisfied and refreshed. It was not long after this, that he was appointed *Barrack Master of Albany*, and went to America; when he arrived there, he regularly performed family prayer in his own house; some of his neighbours frequently attended. He often gave them a word of exhortation, and the encouragement he met with, emboldened him to extend his labours.

Under God, he was one of the first instruments of planting Methodism on the continent of America. And

Thomas Webb, Esq.

there he erected the *first* Methodist chapel, which was in the city of New York. In that city he preached with great success. He wrote to Mr. Wesley, intreating him to send preachers to America: who accordingly in 1769, sent Mr. Richard Boardman, and Mr. Joseph Pilmoor. After his return to England, Mr. Webb took up his residence at Bristol, and preached there, as well as in many places adjacent. In general, great multitudes flocked to hear him; many of whom did not hear in vain. He was instrumental in turning many from the ways of folly and sin, to the paths of wisdom and holiness. Mr. Wesley mentions in his Journal, coming to a place where Captain Webb had lately been. "The Captain," says he, "is all life and fire, and therefore many will hear him, that will not hear a better preacher. And it is very well they do, for he does a great deal of good."

His death, although remarkably sudden, was not unexpected by him. For some time, he appeared to have had a presentiment of his approaching departure, and a few days before he was called hence, he expressed his wishes to a person, concerning the *place* and *manner* of his interment. At the same time he said, "I should prefer a triumphant death; but I may be taken away suddenly. However, I know I am happy in the Lord, and shall be with him, and that is sufficient." A little before ten o'clock in the evening, December 20th, 1796, after taking his supper, and praying with his family, he went to bed, apparently in as good health as usual. But shortly his breathing became difficult. He arose, and sat at the foot of the bed: but while Mrs. Webb was standing by him, he fell back on the bed, and before any other person could be called, without a struggle or groan, he gave up the ghost, aged 72 years. A monument was erected in Portland chapel, in memory of his distinguished piety, and of the exertions he made in the erection of that fabric,

Memoir of Thomas Coke, LL. D.

THOMAS COKE, LL. D.*

The first care of heaven is over the church; it extends to all its members, and numbers the hairs of their head. This assertion is exemplified in the whole scheme of providence. God would not wash away the polluted inhabitants of the ancient world till he had first provided an ark for the faithful family. He refused to indulge Elijah, in his request to die, till he had caused him to throw his mantle on Elisha. And our blessed Lord did not forsake the earth till he had provided a ministry, and thereby ensured the consummation of his work.

God's special care is equally distinguishable not only in calling proper instruments from the treasures of his providence, but in qualifying them for his work. Moses had every endowment as a patriarch, a law-giver, and a prophet. David had a double class of talents to vanquish the enemies of his country, and to re-establish religion. St. Paul, called to convert the Gentiles, though feeble in body, had every endowment of wisdom, of languages, and power, proper to bring over the learned and polished heathen into the church. It was the same with the reformers. Luther had courage, Melancton had wisdom, Calvin had diligence, and Erasmus had wit.

The same gracious cares of heaven are equally discoverable in the rise and progress of Methodism. When the spirit of religion was almost lost in this country, as is confessed by Watts, Butler, and Secker; and when God raised up the venerable Wesley, aided by a few other

* The Editor has great pleasure in announcing, that Mr. Drew, of St. Austell, is employed, agreeably to the Doctor's request, in writing his life at large; and from the former productions of his pen, it is augured that the expectations of the public will not be disappointed.

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clergymen, he gave him a missionary spirit, a cool judgment, a paternal influence, and crowned the whole with the growing lustre of a hoary age. As the work enlarged, Providence acting on its own and primitive plan, raised up the young converts to supply the lack. When certain dignitaries of the church, mortified to see the rising glory of the work, loaded him in a succession of pamphlets with a mass of reproach, he found leisure to reply with that meekness of wisdom, and confidence of truth, which always added new laurels to his cause.

But in 1771, when a body of ministers, and others, called Calvinistic Methodists, assembled in Bristol to renew the continental controversies on the doctrines of grace, and with a determination either to force Mr. Wesley to retract what he deemed his purest tenets, or expose him, as many of them had already done, to the most illiberal reproach, God raised him up a Herculean advocate in the late Mr. Fletcher. In this gentleman were united the clearest light of the reformation, with the purest habits of continental piety. The avenues of sacred knowledge were accessible to him by a liberal acquaintance with languages. The French and German were to him vernacular. And a clear understanding, a lively fancy, a felicity of genius, and a Christian urbanity, gave a finish to his polished manners. This great casuist, in the time of danger, and by the efforts of seven years, covered Methodism with the shield of faith, and defended her vitals with the breast-plate of righteousness. He did more; he stayed her wavering members seduced by beguiling books, whose theology is very unlike the writings of primitive Christianity; and while he corrected error in his opponents, he held them fast by the hand of brotherly love.

Again: as Methodism enlarged its progress, and increased its cares of discipline; and as hoary age, though

Enters as a gentleman commoner at Jesus College, Oxford.

attended with few infirmities, stole on Mr. Wesley, providence, ever faithful to its designs, afforded him the requisite aid in the person of Dr. Coke; a gentleman lively in zeal, ingenuous in design, persevering in efforts; but more calculated to follow a father, than take the lead in so great a work.

He was born at Brecon, in South Wales, September the 9th, and baptized at St. Mary's, October the 5th, 1747. His father's name was Bartholomew Coke, an apothecary of Brecon, and of high esteem, who repeatedly served the office of chief magistrate for that borough. His mother's name was Ann, daughter of Thomas Phillips, Esq. of Frostre, after whom the grandson was named. And as he was an only child, and the fond hope of his parents, they were the more liberal in the plan of his education.

At a proper age, he was placed under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Griffiths, master of the college school in Brecon, for whom the pupil ever expressed a grateful esteem. In his seventeenth year, at the Lent term, he was entered as a gentleman commoner at Jesus College, Oxford. To this splendid seat of letters, young Coke went in the simplicity of his heart, and little aware of the temptations to which he would become exposed. The principles of Christianity had never been opened to him in that distinct and collective view so as to command the assent of the mind; and the doctrines most exposed to attack, he had never been instructed to defend. The consequences were, as might have been foreseen, that he became a prey to the profligate free-thinkers of the age.

To doubt the divine authority of revealed religion, and combat the moral code, have ever been the bias of reason so far as influenced by latent depravity, and the haughtiness of science: and the garb of hypocrisy or of superstition, in which religion has been too often clad, it must be confessed, has somewhat justified the sneers of infidelity. The

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schools at all times have been peculiarly prone to doubt, and even to make a merit of deviating from the creed of the vulgar. Since the revival of letters, the Cartesian philosophy has revived the doubting system: and father Malebranche by mistake, and the French Academy by profession, employing the whole influence of polished literature, have widely diffused it over Europe. This child of error, born to flatter the vanity of man, was so superior and imposing in his airs, and so distinguished in his connections, that his moral character was less perceived. Almost every man of birth and fashion, was proud to claim either a near or remote affinity with his family. However, since he has attained a full maturity of growth and stature in the French revolution, we now know who he is, and have traced his pedigree back to the origin of evil. The philosopher losing sight of God, is a meteor blazing to his own destruction.

For a student, like Des Cartes, to commence his researches by doubting of every thing, except his own existence, is to abandon the religion and knowledge of the holy patriarchs, and embark alone with the frail guide of reason, beclouded with sinful passions! In tracing nature back to her source, and seeking to discover more and more the being and perfections of God from his works, I should think it soon enough to doubt when my difficulties became inseparable. How the superior sense of gentlemen inclined to doubt, demonstrates that the world is eternal, and that "All things shall continue as they were," 2 Pet. iii. 4. they have no where told us; but common sense demonstrates, that the orbs of heaven revolve in fixed periods, and that no number of periods can be coeval with eternity. Common sense demonstrates, that had the first parents of men and animals been produced in the helpless state in which they now are, perish they must; and the sure inference is, that they were cre-

Imbibes principles of infidelity.

ated by the Author of all nature in perfection of stature. Common sense suggests, that a father would give the best advice in his power to his children on all emergent occasions; so are the laws of paternal affection. Why then should we deny, that the Father of mercies has revealed his pleasure concerning the pardon of sin, the terms of reconciliation, and the certainty of a future state? What then must we think of tutors, paid for believing, who have the delicate art to instil into the minds of youth, a modified atheism, which belies every moral feeling of the heart?

Into such hands, the subject of this memoir had the calamity to fall; and the loss of the religious principle was in some degree connected with the loss of the moral; for how should the frailty of youth, unaided by belief in the presence of an all-surrounding and holy God, support itself against the torrent of incessant temptation? Experience every where determines against the presumption.

One night, this young man accompanied a party of students to a house, which of all others he ought to have shunned. But here the blushing modesty of an unspotted youth, the remains of the law written on the heart, and a God in whom he scarcely believed, shook him on the precipice, and withheld him from sin. This circumstance he has sometimes named to a friend with an indelible sentiment of gratitude.

Consequently, his infidelity was not so rooted, but it would have been removed, if he could have found real Christians. He wavered, and often felt his novel creed repugnant to the feelings of his heart. In this state, he paid a visit to a clergyman of Wales, who was also of the free-thinking school. The gentleman, wishful to display his talents in the pulpit, and please his Oxonian visitor, looked out one of his best sermons, and delivered it with

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an unusual degree of animation. His young hearer was absorbed in attention, and powerfully felt the force of divine truth. At dinner, ever ingenuous in character, he did not dissemble the feelings of his heart; but was lavish in praise of the sermon. But ah! the unworthy pastor, diverted himself with the credence of his friend; assuring him at the same time, that he believed nothing at all of the matter.

However, about the year 1769, having serious thoughts of preferring holy orders to any other profession, he gave a calm review to his creed, and began to study the articles he was about to subscribe. Having a little study to himself, he often sat up till the midnight hour, deeply revolving the doubts and difficulties peculiar to infidelity; and with conflicts common to a mind so prepossessed, that would embrace revealed religion. Bishop Sherlock's dissertations and discourses now falling into his hands, gave a happy turn to his mind, and decided the victory in favour of the Christian faith. But these discourses, being deficient in experimental religion, only excited a belief of the truth.

These mental conflicts were not in vain. They gave him clear ideas of divine truth, fixed the sentiments deep in his heart, and accustomed him to a form of sound words. In faith, he was henceforth highly Christian, and Christian in the minutiae of doctrine. On Deists, and all classes of unbelievers, misguided by books, and seduced by companions, he cast a compassionate regard. But on the sly, the cold, and learned Arian, making allowance for his misguided hearers, he looked with the eyes of an Athanasius, and believed that all such, dying without acknowledgment of the truth, perish everlastingly. This may account to us for the great pains he took in arranging the arguments, and adjusting the proofs, in his sermon on the Godhead of Christ.

Chosen chief Magistrate of Brecon—takes his degree of LL. D.

It may here be named, that at the age of twenty-one, he was chosen common councilman of the borough of Brecon, in place of his father, who died while he was a minor; and at the age of twenty-five, he filled the office of chief magistrate, in which he acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of all his friends.

On leaving the university, and looking forward to the hopes of future life, he consulted with his friends as to what reliance he might place on the promises of the great. The prime minister being among the foremost of his patrons, they were all agreed in advising him to *look high*. This advice was no way repugnant to the vanity of an aspiring youth; for at the age of twenty-five, says one of his early companions, “he had not discovered any particular religious zeal.” With these ambitious views he continued to graduate, till he took out his degree of Doctor in the Civil Law, on the 17th of June, 1775. But confidence in an arm of flesh, is often rewarded with the blights of disappointment.

Till now, he had preached occasionally for his friends, and at Road, near Frome. But nothing offered of a permanent nature, except the curacy of South Petherton, in Devon, which he accepted, as it afforded him an ample sphere of labours. Here we trace the commencement of his real religion, though we cannot exactly adjust the dates of the several circumstances.

Entering now on his public functions, we may speak a word of his person. In stature, the Doctor scarcely exceeded five feet and an inch; but his figure was well formed; and few young men in the kingdom possessed a finer face, which accompanied him to the close of life. His eyes and hair were dark, his countenance ruddy, fair, and open. His voice was melodious and engaging; but not strong. When he raised it above the highest natural pitch, it bordered on the screaming tone. But it was

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chiefly the purity of his motives, and the ingenuous character of his sentiments, which conferred a grandeur on the countenance, affected in vain by vitiated courtiers.

A figure so engaging and accomplished, could not fail to attract at Petherton a concourse of hearers, as his sermons were always delivered with animation and zeal. The church was very much crowded, and the country people often obliged to stand the whole time. The tender heart of the pastor felt for the flock, and applied to the Vestry to build a gallery. They, regarding the influx of hearers as the summer streams, could not see the need of expending so much money in vain, and declined the request. But here the warm affection of the pastor, unable to keep pace with the wary prudence of the farmers, engaged a carpenter, and built it at his own expence.

While the Doctor was exercising his ministry at Petherton, the place to which God had sent him that he might receive spiritual help, he became acquainted with Mr. Thomas Maxfield, of whom we have already spoken, *page 319*, as the first lay preacher raised up among the young converts in London, but now a clergyman of the establishment in that neighbourhood. This gentleman took notice of the Doctor and often talked with him of good things.

About the same time, a little book was thrown in his way, entitled, *Alleine's Alarm to the Unconverted*. The author was ejected from the church at Taunton by the Bartholomew Act, and suffered a long imprisonment for preaching abroad. This book describes the nature and marks of conversion in the forcible and happy language of scripture; and it strikes such hard blows at formality and hypocrisy in religion, that no mind, open to conviction, can possibly read it without receiving good impressions: so it proved to the Doctor. Sherlock's Discourses had produced a revolution in his opinions; but Alleine's Alarm produced a revolution in his heart. From

Is awakened, and his views becomes evangelical.

this time, we may date his awakening, and commencement to seek the pardoning love of God. Mr. Fletcher's Appeal, and other tracts, aided him in his progress.

As his views became evangelical, and his religious feelings increased, the stock of moral and pleasing sermons, mostly transcribed from dignified authors, were compelled to undergo a similar change. He intermixed them with such passages as he thought most likely to do the people good. But as yet he only "saw men as trees walking."

As it became whispered about in Petherton that the Doctor was getting divine light, and becoming an evangelical preacher, some of the Dissenters were drawn occasionally to hear. Among these was the late Rev. Mr. Hull,* who had studied at Trevecka while Mr. Fletcher was the tutor, and Mr. Benson the usher. This good man perceiving that the Doctor, like Apollos, "needed the way of God to be expounded unto him more perfectly," addressed him in a friendly letter, which led to a correspondence, and ultimately to an interview. But the appointment was at a *farm house*; for the Doctor ingenuously confessed, that awhile before, his high church prejudices were so strong, that had Mr. Hull been dying, and needed the offices of devotion, he believed he should have declined the task!

* This is the good gentleman of whom an anecdote has been much circulated. One sabbath, he promised his congregation to preach the ensuing Sunday on *Acts* x. 34, and harmonize it with the Calvinistic system; "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The congregation was unusually large; but after a few sentences, he felt such a confusion of ideas obtrude, system against text, and text against system, accompanied with such an extreme agitation, as obliged him to desist, and dismiss the people. During the week, he made the Lord a promise, if spared to another sabbath, to preach his love to all mankind, and invite the whole to Christ, by the free and flowing language of the scriptures; and from that time he began to see more fruit of his ministry.

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While thus engaged in seeking to know and experience the truth, he paid a visit to a family in Devonshire. Here he found an old man who belonged to a small class of Methodists, and was a labourer for the family where the Doctor visited. This poor man and he had frequent conversations concerning the knowledge of pardon, the witness of the Spirit, and the whole economy of Methodism. They opened all their heart and experience to each other, became united in spirit, and prayed together. With regard to the way of finding peace and comfort for his soul, the Doctor has affirmed, that he owed to this poor man greater obligations than to any other person.

As the care for his own salvation increased, the care for others increased in proportion. The parish of Pether-ton was so extensive, that the infirm and aged could not attend the church, and the careless were too idle. The charity of the shepherd compelled him to seek the scattered flock, and preach to them on week evenings, in certain houses of his friends.

In the course of providence, it often happens that an irksome duty faithfully discharged, or a cross borne with patience, is productive of the greatest blessing. So it proved now. After preaching pardon to others for two whole years, and mourning for it himself, with many temptations and fears, he walked one evening to preach in the country, and while unfolding the great truths of redeeming love, the Lord suddenly broke into his soul, and so filled him with "the comforts of the Holy Ghost," that he thought every other person in the room had felt the same. All his doubts and clouds were removed in a moment, and he instantly felt a power to call God his father, by the spirit of adoption, in a manner he had never done before.

The clear and distinguished manner in which it pleased God to set this minister's soul at liberty, may account for

Persecuted by the clergy, and called Methodist.

his future zeal in asserting the direct witness of the Spirit; for his sermon on 1 John, v. 10. published in America by request, and largely preached at home; and for his manly defence of the doctrine against a methodical clergyman who had wished to accommodate it a little to the taste of the age. On this subject, which belongs to prayer rather than disputation, whatever may be the sneers of dean Jortin, or the compromises of others, there is assuredly no difference of its illustration in Calvin's comment on Rom. viii. 16; in Wesley's sermon on the same subject, and in the learned Mede's discourse of the first epistle of John, on knowing Christ. Certainly such a witness is essential for the removal of fear, for sanctification, and for inspiring a minister with the true spirit of his duty.

The happy change which the Doctor had experienced in his heart, presently began to operate in the pulpit. The glowing freedom of his soul did but ill associate with the confinement of the manuscript. It is a pity that the eyes of a minister of heaven should be constantly withdrawn from the people, and cast on the velvet cushion. The homilies of the fathers abound with remarks suggested in the pulpit, which proves, that in the main, they were written after delivery. Why then should the fire of genius, and the power of the Spirit, now be hampered with the manuscript?

Hence, in a short time, our young convert, laid it wholly aside; and the first time he did so, three souls were awakened by his word. From that time he began to see fruit, and the work of God revive in the church.

But it was not likely that the enemy should see all this and be idle. The wicked who had hitherto called him a Methodist in jest, now began to call him so in earnest. Some of the neighbouring clergy took offence at his village preaching, and drawing off their hearers; several of

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the heads of the parish were greatly offended with his new and lively method of preaching. Letters were written against him to Dr. Ross, the then bishop of Exeter. But his lordship's reply was mild and forbearing. He said, that the utmost he could do was to suspend him for three months, and that if he did so, the Methodists would say that they were persecuted for righteousness' sake. Hence, he preferred leaving the Doctor to do the best he could for his people. The issue was, that the vicar, joining the discontented, dismissed his curate, without allowing him time to take leave of the congregation; and his opponents taking advantage of the moment, proclaimed their triumph by causing him to be *chimed* out of the church.

It is not unlikely, that the Doctor had been pressing conversion upon them, with energies and warmth of language, which irritated the revolting heart. Great indulgence however should be allowed to a young convert of this description, as future experience will attemperate the first effusions of zeal.

But a pastor so zealous, expelled by a stroke of caprice, cannot but have a number of friends, whose love will rekindle by the blasts of persecution. Mr. Maxfield, in particular, supported and comforted him throughout all his troubles. These friends solicited, and the Doctor felt it a duty to deliver his soul of the wicked, and to comfort his flock before he left the country. Wishful to do this in two sermons, he delivered the latter at noon as the people came out of church. His antagonists still more chafed by his courage, in delivering the first sermon, determined to stone him the next sabbath; and were open and avowed in their threats. Danger was really feared by his friends.

But a few fields from Petherton there resides an amiable dissenting family of the name of Edmondson. The

Escapes being stoned—his future prospects beclouded.

gentleman had a son and a daughter who were fond of hearing the Doctor. That morning, the parents, prior to their going to the meeting, had cautioned the young folks not to leave home; but affection prevailing over fear, they took their horses and rode to the town; and when the Doctor stood up, braving danger, they took their stand, the one on his right, and the other on his left. There were skulking behind the crowd, certain base fellows, instructed by ingenuous malice, who had provided stones in hampers; but on seeing that they could not hit him, without wounding their benefactors, they desisted from their wicked design. After sermon, the young folks took the Doctor home, and from that time, this house was his constant residence in all his future visits to Petherton.

On a calm review of his situation, during the last month of his stay in this neighbourhood, whatever might be his inward solace, we see him covered with an impervious cloud, with regard to future life. As to preferment, though he had now waited almost seven years, he found the promises of the great, breathed as the incense of spring, likely to terminate in an east wind. To give effect to those promises by staking his fortune, since his conversion, he did not dare to do. He feared the leprosy of Gehazi, and trembled at the curse inflicted on Simon. To wander and seek another curacy, from which he might again be dismissed at pleasure, was too humiliating for a gentleman who was in no want of bread. In this way was Providence pleased to try and humble a worm, designated to move in a higher sphere of glory and usefulness in the church. It blocked up the avenues of hope, and permitted his foes to rejoice, lest he should, through an ambition to which his heart was prone, reject the humble path, as yet concealed behind the cloud, leading to laurels of eternal fame. Thus God is often pleased to

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exercise his chosen instruments before they enter on a great work, that they may learn to know themselves, trust in his care, and embrace the openings of his pleasure, which so far in excellence surpass the fond cravings of the human heart.

Meanwhile, the Doctor's opponents had no great comfort of their triumph. The worth of certain characters is not appreciated till we feel their loss. In walking the street, they every where met a mournful countenance. The poor had lost their benefactor, the people their pastor, the sick their comforter, and the wicked the only person that kept them in awe. But on the Doctor's future visit, sober reason having regained the sovereignty, these same opponents were the foremost to chastise their own folly. "Well," said they, "we *chimed* him out, and now we will atone for our error by ringing him in." So are the issues of bearing adversity with a becoming temper of mind.

While the Doctor remained enveloped in this cloud of darkness and suspense, the morning beams gently opened at the appointed time. He incidentally learned, that Mr. Wesley was to preach at Taunton, at noon, August the 13th, 1776, and take a bed at Mr. Brown's, of Kingston, the same evening. This oppressed minister, moved by a divine impulse, took a horse and rode twenty miles to meet him, that he might ease his heart and ask advice. The interview was interesting, and connected with that union of spirit which language cannot describe. Mr. Wesley frankly unfolded all his work, and the need he had of clerical assistance, (to which he ever gave a double portion of favour,) and the Doctor embraced it with all his heart. The same evening, Mr. Wesley recorded in his journal, that he had formed a friendship with this gentleman, which he believed would be as lasting as his life. The Doctor, after retiring to weigh the nature of his en-

Joins the Methodists, and becomes an itinerant preacher.

gagements, shook off every fear, trampled on every hope, and passed the Rubicon to look back no more.

London was the first sphere of his itinerant labours. Before his arrival, the people had heard of his conversion, and usefulness in the country; and were so far prepossessed in his favour, that whenever he preached, the chapel was crowded out of doors. Hence, on the sabbaths, he frequently preached abroad. The five fields, now formed into Tavistock square, and other streets, was to him a favourite; spot and God added many seals to his ministry.

With regard to the talents essential to so great a work, we cannot but admire the wisdom of God in its happy distribution, and in often giving the preference of usefulness to the weaker instrument. In the Methodist connexion of that age, some preachers were remarkable for holiness; as Johnson, Valton, Murlin, Pawson, &c. Others excelled in strength of intellect, as Mather, Hopper, Thompson, &c. Others were great in the pulpit, as Cownley, Broadbent, and many who yet survive. Among these, it was difficult for the Doctor to shine. Yet he had a quickness of penetration, a warm and lively sense of piety, an unwearied activity, besides a certain deference paid to the sacerdotal dignity, which fairly entitled him to the rank he held in the connexion. Whenever he erred through too much haste, he was so prompt and open in acknowledging his fault, as to ensure forgiveness.

As Mr. Wesley could visit the societies of the united kindom but once in two years, it fell to the Doctor's lot to go the opposite year. He was every where received as an angel of God; in some places he found the doors of the church open for his reception; and as a clergyman, accompanied with friends, he often ventured into new places, where a layman scarcely dared to shew his face.

In 1784, Mr. Wesley having entered into his 81st year,

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began to think more seriously of giving a government to his societies which might ensure their future prosperity and peace. Some had prompted him to think of an executive government of five or seven persons ; and he probably had something of that in view when he appointed seven preachers to succeed him in the chapel at City-road. Biassed, however, as a clergyman, it rather appears from the last seven years of his life, that he preferred a presbytery of one hundred preachers, headed by a qualified episcopacy, or general superintendents. Some, however, contend, that he preferred this plan exclusively for the societies abroad.

Peace being now established with the United States ; and Mr. Asbury and the other preachers, having been instrumental of a great revival in the back settlements during the war, solicited him to send them help. Hence, in February this year, he called Dr. Coke into his chamber, and spoke to him nearly as follows: That as the American brethren wanted a form of discipline, and ministerial aid ; and, as he ever wished to keep to the Bible, and as near to primitive Christianity as he could, he had always admired the Alexandrian mode of ordaining bishops.—The presbyters of that great apostolical church, would never allow any foreign bishop to interfere in their ordinations ; but on the death of a bishop, for two hundred years, till the time of Dionysius, they ordained one of their own body, and by the imposition of their own hands. Adding withal, that he wished the Doctor to go over and establish that mode among the American Methodists.*

All this was quite new to the Doctor. The idea of an Alexandrian ordination, was at first somewhat revolting to his prejudices. However, being about to set out for Scotland, he weighed the subject for two months, and then wrote his entire approbation of the plan. Accord-

* See the Minutes for 1784 and 1785.

Embarks for America, and arrives there in forty-six days.

ingly, he was ordained bishop, and brothers Whatcoat and Vasey, presbyters. They sailed from Bristol, the 18th of September, with the fervent prayers of God's people, and arrived at New York, after a fine passage of forty-six days.

The Doctor now finding himself in a new region, entered on a very extensive ministerial tour for the space of thirty weeks; and found almost in every place the people eager for the word of life. The frequency of his preaching, the extent of his journies, the multitude of children and adults he baptized, with all the cares he employed to establish the Methodist discipline, give us a grand idea of his assiduity and zeal.

On Christmas-eve, he opened the general Conference at Baltimore, and proceeded to invest Francis Asbury with the episcopal dignity. This venerable man still survives, to wear laurels far superior to those conferred by human hands. He had been sent out thirteen years before, after travelling four years at home; and in 1772, was appointed the leading preacher of the work in the colonies. He is a character adorned with every virtue that can add reverence to the Ministerial office. Animated with the spirit of St. Paul, and the patriotism of a Cincinnatus, he never would receive more than the allowance of about sixteen pounds a year for clothes, which is given to every preacher.

At this Conference, sixty preachers were present, and twenty one absent. On opening Mr. Wesley's plan, the brethren, in proceeding to elect presbyters, seemed to be divested of all private considerations, and to make men's piety and usefulness the primary considerations of their choice. Every other preacher in full connexion was ordained a deacon. But though there was a great revival in the States, prior to these ordinations; yet from the continued prosperity and union of the churches,

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we cannot deny that the step was founded in wisdom, and is happy in operation.

By the peace of 1783, the independence of the United States was established. The loyalists, who had borne arms, being proscribed, took refuge in Nova Scotia, and other parts of British America, and received lands at the head of the Coves on the coasts. Among these, were many religious families who were desirous of a ministry. During the year and a few months which the Doctor was at home, he warmly interested himself in making collections and preparations to go out with a mission to Halifax, and other places. After the conference in 1786, he sailed in company with three brethren, Warrener, Hammet, and Clarke, to visit Halifax, on his way to the United States. Such indeed was his design; but God, whose way is wisdom, saw the more deplorable state of the West Indians, and was pleased to send the help to them by the fury of the tempests. The captain, after contending with baffling winds for ten weeks, his ship leaky, and short of water, was compelled to bear away for the West Indies.

During the night of November the 30th, a strong gale from the north west increased to a hurricane; and continued so tremendous, that the hatchet was laid for a fortnight in readiness to cut away the masts. This night, the ship was on her beam ends, the leak gaining rapidly, and the carpenters only waited the word to cut the masts and rigging away. The poor passengers exhibited a deplorable scene, and called the missionaries out of bed for prayer. They retired into the cabin, and while engaged with God, were favoured with unusual composure and calm. But brother Hammet excelled them all in faith. His first prayer, if it could be called prayer, was little else than a declaration of assurance that God would save the ship; and his second, was a

Arrives at Antigua on Christmas-eve, 1786.

sort of thanksgiving to God, as though the danger had already been past. Suffice it to say, that they arrived safe at Antigua on Christmas-eve.

The Doctor has sometimes related an outrage he received from the captain, during this tempest. When destruction threatens a ship, it is every one's business to do his utmost to save her, and to recollect his sins with becoming meekness of heart. But the wicked, ignorant of religion, and ever prone to superstition, are apt to ascribe the cause of their calamities to the faults of others. The captain walked about the deck muttering, "We have a Jonah on board." The idea of the loss of his life, and the terrors of futurity, at length wrought him up to so great a pitch of fury, that he entered the Doctor's cabin, seized his books, and papers, and threw them overboard. His fury rather fed than satiated, he returned and seized the Jonah, gave him two or three rude hugs, and then went off, swearing, that if ever he made another prayer on board his vessel, he surely would throw him after his papers.

As the mission landed on Christmas-day, they met a minister, known by his band, going to perform divine service. It proved to be Mr. Baxter, once a class-leader of the Chatham society, but now store-keeper of the English harbour. Nathaniel Gilbert Esq. speaker to the house of Assembly, had formed a little society in this Island, and after Mr. Gilbert's death, Mr. Baxter had preserved and fed the orphan flock. This gentleman, after conversing with the Doctor, resigned his lucrative office, and gave himself wholly up to missionary labours.

The mission being thus driven to Antigua, instead of Halifax, perceived their call to profit by circumstances, and distribute themselves in the several Islands. From this place they proceeded to St. Vincent's, and left brother Clarke, to whom a fine sphere of usefulness was opened.

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After scattering some seeds at Dominica, they reached St. Christopher's, where many gladly received the word: Here brother Hammet was left in charge of the work. The Doctor next reached St. Eustatius; but the Dutch governor, not allowing him to preach, he spent eighteen days in privately catechising the negroes, and believed that no part of his life was ever more usefully employed. It was no small encouragement, that in most of the Islands, the Doctor found some Methodist family overjoyed to meet him again, and a few pious soldiers in every regiment ready to join in the work. After spending seven weeks in these Islands, and doing all the severest work of a missionary, he reached Charlestown on the last day of February.

Entering now on his second tour, he experienced an unexpected difficulty. Some of the preachers taxed him with a wish to exercise a jurisdiction over them to which he had not been *invited*. This being disavowed, he comfortably completed his mission, and reached Dublin bay on the 25th of June, in time to meet Mr. Wesley at the Irish Conference.

The next fifteen months, this indefatigable man spent in visiting the principal towns of the united kingdom; preaching, and begging for the missions in the daily efforts of an unabating zeal. He sent Mr. Mc Geary to Newfoundland, and others to other places, as solicited by letters. Several settlements abroad, hearing of our efforts, employed the captains of ships to ask Mr. Wesley for a missionary.

After the Conference in 1788, the Doctor embarked with three brethren, Lumb, Gamble, and Pearce, for the West Indies. But, instructed by past experience, he now sought a religious captain, and found Mr. Sundius, who joined the mission in worship, and had the satisfaction to notice good impressions made on the sailors. On the 4th

Arrives at Barbadoes in the West Indies.

of December, after a pleasant passage, they arrived safe at Barbadoes. After spending one week in this island, he went to St. Vincent's, and next day set out with Mr. Baxter across the rugged mountain paths to visit the Caribs. They possess a plain seven miles in extent, and three in breadth, with the declivities of the adjacent hills; and are in number about five thousand. Among these the Doctor established three schools, in which Mrs. Baxter took an active part; but for want of perseverance in efforts, failed in producing the desired effects.

February the 19th, he again visited Dominica, and formed the scattered flock into a society of twenty-four members. On the 24th he reached Antigua, which may be denominated in a comparative view, the religious island. The missionary efforts here have been crowned with happy effects; the Moravians, as well as the Methodists, have very large societies. On going to St. Christopher's, he found that Mr. Hammet, by the Divine blessing, had raised a society of seven hundred members. Thence the Doctor sailed on a visit to St. Eustatius, and returned again. From St. Christopher's, he touched at Saba, and made a beginning; and thence proceeded to Tortola, where, after preaching twice, he embarked, and reached Port Royal in Jamaica, on the 19th of March. After preaching here with much interruption from intoxicated gentlemen, he embarked for Charlestown, and landed on the 24th.

The Methodist connexion in the United States, extending over a surface of about two thousand miles, was at this time divided into about seven conferences, which are held in close succession: this has proved a happy and admired resource, as the whole is wound up by a general conference, composed of representatives. The Doctor presided in each of these, as Mr. Asbury filled the chair the opposite year. To these very ex-

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hausting labours were added, preaching almost daily; very extensive journies through difficult roads; fording swamps, in one of which, being alone, and far from any house, his horse was borne away with the torrent, and when he again touched the shore, a floating tree which had obstructed his first landing, came on his back, and held him suspended in the water for five minutes. Here was a trial of his faith; here were moments allowed for the mind to recover its wonted calm, before its expected launch into eternity. The unseen hand thus held him, and then causing the timber to give way, he had just strength left to get out of the water, and walk a long way to a cottage in the woods.

During this third tour, the Doctor began to be known; and in some places, where he had before experienced rude behaviour, he found that the principal families in the neighbourhood attended in their carriages. He was, perhaps, at no period more popular than now. Among the many compliments paid to his person and ministry, that of *the flying angel* was not the least handsome.

On the 8th of May, he visited Cokesbury College, twenty-five miles from Baltimore, under the presidency of Dr. Hall, and was very much pleased with the progress of the boys, and young men. A few years afterwards, just as the legislature were about to incorporate this college, and allow its officers, under the usual regulations, to confer degrees, it was burnt to the ground. Providence hitherto does not seem to favour Methodism, so similar to primitive Christianity, in becoming spoiled by affinity with worldly grandeur. On the 5th of June he embarked at New York, and arrived at Liverpool in five weeks.

After labouring incessantly at home for sixteen months in the usual way, and sending individual missionaries privately, the Doctor sailed from Falmouth, Oct. 16th, to

Embarks a third time for the West Indies.

make his third tour in the West Indies, and his fourth on the Continent. Two missionaries, brother Lyons, and brother Werrill accompanied him. On leaving the islands, he narrowly escaped shipwreck among the Martyrs, a vast range of uninhabited rocks; but arrived safe at Charlestown. During his visit to the Southern States, he was struck with the number of men he found who had been baptized with the Christian name of *Wesley*. The reformed churches abroad, and the puritans at home, have frequently honored eminent ministers in this way; and no proof can be more indubitable of the high estimation in which the unexampled labours of the two Wesleys are held by that people.

On his way to the North, he made a visit to the Catawba Indians, with a view to establish a school among them; but found them more solicitous of military aid than of sacred instruction. The most remarkable notices which obtruded on the Doctor in this tour were, every where to find an increase of members, with a correspondent increase of hearers, of chapels, and of temporal prosperity. But receiving intelligence of Mr. Wesley's death from the public papers, he hastened home, a month before the usual time.

From this event, as the missions multiplied abroad, the provident cares at home, increased in proportion. But the conference aided his efforts by granting an annual collection in support of the growing and blessed work.

Here a just tribute may be paid to the cares of heaven in preserving the lives of the missionaries in the Torrid Zone. Out of fourteen who sailed the first six years, we lost but brother Gamble; and out of fifteen who sailed the next six years, making a total of twenty-nine sent out, though the yellow fever began to rage, we lost but three! Where can we find a parallel case in any regiment, or in any equal number of men

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who have gone thither for civil employment? Since 1798, it is true, we have lost a somewhat greater proportion, chiefly through fevers; but the constitutions of the young men had not been seasoned at home with the fatigues of the ministry, which, in all cases, is preferable to be done.

Though the Doctor was now fully employed, yet new work of a studious and most laborious kind was assigned him to do. In the stationing committee of 1792, complaint was made, that the Methodists wanted a commentary on the Holy Scriptures; to form a medium between the verbosity of Henry, and the brevity of Wesley, partly critical, to illustrate difficult texts, but mostly practical, to be food for the soul. The eyes of the committee were turned towards the Doctor, as the most eligible man for the work. The conference approved of the plan, and he acceded to their request. The point in which he deviated was, by extending the work to six quarto volumes, instead of three. But elegance being his character, he engaged with the King's printer, and paid a gentleman half-a-guinea per sheet for collations of classical words, and extra corrections. Hence his commentary, in a typographical view, may be regarded as one of the most correct in the English language.

On going to Holland about a year after, to solicit from the states a toleration in St. Eustatius, he advised with Dr. Maclaine, in order to procure materials for that work. The Doctor's father-in-law having published six volumes quarto, comprising a valuable collection of Biblical notes in French, put the work into his hands. From this treasure he translated very many notes; but found, after a while, that the industrious Dr. W. Dodd had gleaned the field before him. After that, being pressed for time, he mostly followed Dodd. He interspersed the work with quotations from numerous writers; and with pious re-

Sails a fifth time for America.

flections of his own, which many families delight to read for morning worship.

This great work employed the Doctor fourteen years. What an idea must we form of his assiduity and labours! Combating a constitution inclined to corpulence, rising pretty early for study, travelling by day to collect for the missions, or answering correspondents, preaching almost every evening, in the heat of very crowded chapels, taking long journies, crossing the Atlantic eighteen times, with twice that number of smaller passages, besides his final voyage! Surely it was with propriety, that the friends in Manchester have chosen this motto for his escutcheon in the Oldham Street chapel, "IN LABOURS MORE ABUNDANT."

On the 1st of Sept. 1792, in company with brother Graham, he embarked at Gravesend, and reached the Chesapeake on the 28th of October. In this voyage, he was again happy in meeting with a captain, who desired prayers at the stated hours, and entered the times in his log-book. The sea to the Doctor was a period of recess, and the most favourable time he could find for his commentary; though writing at sea is incommoded with a constant exercise of the hands and feet. On the 20th, as he approached the coast, and was about to open his commission anew, he writes thus, "This morning I renewed my covenant with God in a temper of mind as solemn and happy as I ever experienced; my first espousals to God not excepted." The next day he adds, "The comfortable frame of mind I experienced yesterday, still continues,---how kind is the Lord in giving his children such heavenly cordials in the course of their pilgrimage."

After holding the general conference at Baltimore, which was now become so large as to continue fifteen days, and making a central tour to the 12th of December,

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he embarked at New York for the West Indies. But prior to his going on board, he spent twelve days in that city, establishing a book-room for supplying the American societies with the most useful publications. His accommodations in the small brig in which he now sailed, were dirty beyond description; yet he felt that he could live as Hottentots, provided his labours might be blessed in the Lord. On arriving at St. Eustatius, he had the calamity to find Rennolds, the old persecuting Governor, restored to office, and that he had revived his cruel system against the poor negroes for holding *prayer-meetings*. Many of them had been severely flogged; yea, women, merely for being present at those meetings, had been tied to the whipping-post, and deeply cut with the lash of the common executioner!

Unable to do any thing in this island, except the administration of private comfort, the Doctor proceeded to Dominica, and thence to St. Vincent's, where he found brother Lumb in prison, for continuing to preach after the day in which a new act had begun to operate. At this juncture, Mr. Abraham Bishop arrived from the River St. John's, in Nova Scotia. This amiable young gentleman, a native of Jersey, had gone out to preach to the French on that river, having a letter of recommendation from the Right Hon. Mr. Pitt. The Doctor accompanied him to Grenada, where the French is much spoken, that he might take care of the destitute flock gathered by Mr. Owens. But ah! this very pious and amiable youth caught the fever, and drooped, and died. Here the pious Mr. Dent, rector of St. George's, and faithful friend of the missionaries, accommodated the Doctor with his pulpit.

Having next proceeded to Tortola and St. Kitt's, he engaged a small sloop on the 9th, and made a circuitous voyage to collect all the missionaries to Antigua, and

Anecdote of a Negro having three wives.

hold the first conference. They were twelve in number, and in six years their little work had increased to 6,570 members, besides twice that number under instruction. Their difficulties from local depravity were many and great. Concubinage among the whites, and polygamy among the blacks, were among the greatest impediments. The polite professions of willingness in the planters to have their negroes instructed, proved to be compliments to the solicitations of a clergyman, rather than sentiments of the heart.

Mr. Owens has related a case of polygamy, which is very interesting. A planter, having a negro of remarkable strength, had indulged him, for obvious motives, with three wives. This negro was awakened under Mr. Owen's ministry, and after receiving a course of instruction, he applied for a note to meet in class. The three women, having knowledge of his purpose, followed, and stood in the passage, where they could hear every word through a partition of boards. When the missionary told him, that, if he joined the society, he could retain but one wife, the women could no longer retain their patience. They rushed in all at once, and made their defence with great vehemence, and profusion of tears. The first said, "Me got five pickaninnies—five pickaninnies, Massa! If Jim leave me, I cannot live." The second said, "Me got three pickaninnies, Massa; me make Jim a very good wife; me ought not to be forsaken." The third had not the plea of children, but she was equally earnest in her claims. She said, "Massa, me never made Jim a fault; me make Jim a very good wife; me wash Jim's shirt, and do all his work; me ought not to be cast off."

The preacher sat silent, and wept. The decision was not in his power; but the generous negro pressed to unfold his heart, turning to the second said, "You can do

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better with three than she with five;" and to the third he said, "You have no children, and there is no fear but you will live." So he received his probationary note, and led home the one with five children as his only wife.

After this conference, the Doctor proceeded to Barbadoes, and thence down the gulph to Jamaica, where he had the pleasure to find the work revived.—But in all these wide and expensive efforts, the openness of the good man's heart, was greater than his resources. By advances on the little West India chapels, he had made great inroads on his private fortune. Men of monied interest would smile at his securities; yet, it is presumed from the prosperity of the work, that he sustained no great loss. He reached England early in June, and narrowly escaped being captured by a French privateer as he entered the channel.

In the course of the next ten years, he made four other voyages to visit the work in America, and having nearly finished his commentary, he had serious thoughts of settling in the United States; but on stating the terms on which he would come, with regard to presiding in the conferences, discipline, &c. it does not appear that the preachers were pressing in their invitation. So he virtually resigned; and Mr. Mc Kendree, an aged presbyter, was elected general superintendent in his place.

Of the mission to Siera Leone, the mission in the Irish, and the Welch languages, the last of which is a very great and astonishing work, we say nothing, being wishful not to enlarge on subjects generally known. But in support of the Welch missions, both he, and Mr. Davies, the general superintendent, have made great exertions.

Suffice to say, that the Doctor believing sincerely in his call to these great and extensive efforts, had forborne to enter into the marriage state. But now feeling some

Marries Miss Smith, of Bradford, Wilts.

slight infirmities of age, to cast a look towards a retreat was very natural, though he never needed such a retreat. Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Valton had proceeded on the same plan.

It now happened that what had been his greatest cross, brought him the dowry of an ample reward; I would say, begging for the missions. While at the Hot-wells, a lady said to him, "Doctor have you called on Miss Smith? She is here on a visit, and I am sure she will give you something handsome." He thanked the lady, and took the address of her friend. On calling, and politely stating the cause on which he had stepped forth in this public way, she went to her desk, and presented him with a note of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS! The Doctor was almost confounded at the gift; but was more struck with the disposition of the giver, who in his eyes was all that was excellent; and she really was a disciple of her Lord. The issue was, that in a few months they were married.

This lady was the only child of Joseph Smith, Esq. solicitor of Bradford, Wilts. Through a paternal fondness, and a fear lest she should fall into the hands of some person not agreeable to him, he had kept her almost a prisoner at home. From a child she was inclined to religion, and very much employed her hours of solitude in sacred music, in which she had made some progress. To Methodism she was very much attached; and this was almost the only point in which her father crossed her wishes. She could never openly espouse the cause till after her father's death. Ah! little did he think that he was hoarding up more than twenty thousand pounds for a Methodist clergyman, and for the missions at Ceylon!

After his marriage, the Doctor bought a plain car-

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riage; but did not encumber himself with either horses or servants. He travelled the same route as before; but stayed longer in the towns. He seemed happy in this companion of his age, and accommodated himself as far as possible to all her wishes, charities, and daily efforts of doing good. He was, however, deprived of this valuable woman early in the seventh year after marriage. She died in London, and was interred in the family vault of the priory church of Brecon.

The same causes which disposed the Doctor to a first marriage, after the lapse of about a year, disposed him to a second. He formed a connexion with Miss Loxdale of Liverpool; a lady who had long been eminent for piety, and of a good family, but whose health was too delicate to accompany the Doctor. Hence, the friends of both the parties disapproved of the marriage. Of this lady he was deprived in the course of seven months.

This stroke operated on his mind, and he began more seriously to think of embracing the opening of going out with a mission to Ceylon. For many years, a wish to visit India had slumbered in his breast; and he had strove to decipher the swelling impulse which had feasted on every vestige of religious intelligence from the East. Individuals of the company he had often sounded, but without effect. Authorized by a charter successively renewed, they keep the keys of Hindoostan with the same jealous care as the keys of their counting-house. The Company in Lisbon have been the foremost to send out missionaries, and have received the missionary influence in grateful return; but the Company in London act on the opposite principle. The monopoly of an individual we can oppose; but against the monopoly of a Sovereign Company, we have no resource.

The Island of Ceylon not being in the Company's charter, became the object of the Doctor's attention,

Prepares for his voyage to India.

which, in a missionary view, may be considered as the key of India. The island is about as large as Ireland. Candia, the capital, is situate in the bosom of the mountains, and governed by its own king, who is powerful in the interior. But Candia having been repeatedly burnt by the Portuguese, on gaining the eminences, the court in 1660 removed to Dilege. The mountains contain mines of copper and iron. The people subsist chiefly on rice and fruits; and the languages they speak are the Tamul, and the Cingalese. The towns, the bays, and coasts were occupied by Europeans; and by a confluence of strangers, who speak every language of the adjacent continent. The island was taken from the Dutch in 1795, and ceded to us by the late peace.

The Doctor, after weighing this opening, and finding certain gentlemen, high in office, willing to encourage the gospel in the East, became satisfied of his call to go, provided he could find six young men of hopeful talents willing to go out, and devote their lives to the work. He waited on the late Dr. Buchanan, distinguished through India by the efforts of Christian zeal, and largely consulted him on the subject. And when his intention became known at large, five preachers already in the work, viz. James Lynch, William Ault, George Erskine, William Harvard, and Thomas Squance, were willing to go. To these were added, Benjamin Clough, a local preacher. The conference could not but approve of the plan, as Providence obviously opened the way; and especially as the Doctor, if necessity required, was willing to bear the expence of the out-fit, which amounted to above six thousand pounds.

After the Conference of 1813, he assembled the six brethren in London, procured them a Portuguese tutor; a printing-press and types, as one or two of the missionaries understood that business. Their books, clothes,

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and smaller articles, were furnished on a state adequate to a permanent residence in India. The mission, followed by the prayers of the faithful, took its departure from Spithead on the 31st of December, and reached Bombay after a fine passage of twenty weeks, and three days.

The Doctor was observed to tremble a little as he stepped into the boat at Portsmouth point; a circumstance, we believe, not very usual with him. During the voyage, he was cheerful, and quite in the spirit of his mission, often helping the brethren in their learning, and talking of his future plans. He seemed not to have the least presentiment of the transition which awaited him. On the 1st of May, he complained of slight indisposition, which continued during the next day; but he walked the deck, and retired at the usual hour. He desired brother Clough to give him from the chest a little aperient medicine, which he did; and offered to sit up; but the Doctor said, there was no need, shook hands, and wished him a good night. Early in the morning, he was found dead on the floor, and quite cold! Hence it was concluded, that he was summoned away about midnight, and by a stroke of apoplexy, to which his constitution was disposed. The same day in the evening, his body was committed to the deep, which proved a very affecting time to the whole ship's company.

Thus finished the course of this blessed man, unparalleled in missionary travels. Like Moses, he was not permitted to enter the land, but he breathed the gales wafted from the orient shores. Well!—he died—but his cause lives. He laid the foundation; others survive to finish. We are disposed to hope, from a retrospective view of the whole, that all the actions and efforts of his life, were but a series of introductory openings to the scene of his mission to the East. His conversion from

Reflections on his death.

Deism by Sherlock's discourses; his being directed to Petherton, where he found Mr. Maxfield, a man of a missionary spirit; the distinguished manner in which he found peace with God; the encouragement which his missions at home and abroad afforded his mind; the indifference with which the American brethren received his offers to settle among them; the additional money which fell into his hands by marriage; the death of his first and second wife; the preservation of his health to the last period of life,—all seem to indicate, that Providence designed him to fall in this last and best mission of his Lord and Master. Had he attempted to force his way to India when he first felt the rising impulse, the gentlemen would not have been prepared with light to second his views; his glorious work at home and abroad would have sunk into decay; neither his fortune, nor the finances of Methodism, could have borne the expence. But now many of the missions abroad are become so strong, that they can help others; and missionary societies and committees are formed in the principal towns of England, to supply the Doctor's lack, and support the work.

But O! the manner of his death re-echoes with a voice from India to all the preachers who survive; to the myriads who heard him preach, and to all who know his case. Let us listen to that voice. Let us hear the har-binger of the Lord. "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh. Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh! Blessed is that servant, whom when his Lord cometh, shall find so doing;" whether active at his post, or meekly stooping under disease, the applaudit of his Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant," shall wipe away all tears from his eyes.

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I shall here insert a copy of the Doctor's Journal of his voyage to Asia, as far as it has been received. It is probable that he kept a regular Journal till the day of his death; but what follows is all that has yet come to hand.

“At the Conference, held in Liverpool, in August, 1813, it was determined, with the help of God, to establish missions in Asia; and particularly, in the first instance, in the islands of Ceylon and Java. For this purpose six missionaries were appointed to accompany me to that quarter of the globe. But when I returned to London, and made inquiry for a ship bound to Ceylon, I found that there was not one to sail for that island. The most intelligent, in respect to Asiatic voyages, of those whom I was able to consult, advised me to take a passage for Bombay, as the monsoons would be in our favour to sail for Ceylon immediately on our arrival.

“I accordingly took a passage for myself and my six companions, the Messrs. Ault, Lynch, Erskine, Harvard, Squance, and Clough; and for Mrs. Ault and Mrs. Harvard, in two of the Indiamen bound for Bombay—the *Cabalva*, of which Captain Birch is the commander, and the *Lady Melville*, commanded by Captain Lochner. It would, in many respects, have been desirable for us to have sailed together in one ship; but neither of the above-mentioned could have taken us all: and to have gone all together in one ship, which might have been accomplished, would have cost in all, nine hundred pounds more for our passages. We had therefore no choice; and I have reason to believe that the whole was of God.

“In the ship, in which I have sailed, there are above four hundred souls. Of these, two hundred are soldiers, who, excepting a very few, are, as far as I can learn, young lads from Ireland, of the Roman Catholic persuasion. About fifty of the sailors are Lascars, and chiefly,

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if not entirely, I am afraid (for I have been talking with some of them) Mahometans. The gospel-door, as it respects that people, seems entirely shut. Their religion was established by the sword, and I fear the sword must go through their nations before they will bow to the sceptre of Jesus. However, by their own master they must stand or fall. We have among us some Portuguese, natives of India; I wish we may be useful to them. In the dining-room our number is twenty-six, inclusive of the Captain and his two first officers. They are very polite; but, Oh! we want to save souls!

“I have a most charming study. It has two large windows that open from the stern to the sea: and my elbow-chair and my table are placed in the most convenient situation possible. I have seen, I think, seventeen ships of our fleet sailing after us. Here I employ almost all my time, and nearly the whole of it, in reading and writing Portuguese, excepting my hours of meditation, which, indeed, I can hardly except; for my chief study is my Portuguese Bible. O how sweet is the Word of God! I have loved it since I came into this ship more than ever I did before:

“Jesus gives me, in his word,
Food and medicine, shield and sword.”

“I now feel, I think, more than ever, the value of retirement, silence, and tranquillity of mind; and can say of my God what Virgil did of his Augustus:—*Deus nobis hæc otia fecit*. ‘God himself has favoured me with these leisure hours.’—And yet I cannot repent of the thousands of hours which I have spent in the most vile, the most glorious drudgery of begging from house to house. The tens of thousands of pounds which I have raised for the missions, and the beneficial effects thereof, form an ample

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compensation for all the time and all the labour. The whole was in God. But what would my heart have felt, if all the missions already established, had been left without support on my departure from England? But it was the work of God. He alone began it, and he alone increased it; and (if I may presume so to express myself with humble modesty) he has bound himself to support it. He, therefore, before I sailed said, to the north '*bring forth,*' and to the south '*keep not back.*' The west also is coming forwards. The sister island has taken the flame, and the highly-favoured British isles conspire to spread our missions throughout the world. How light it has made my heart! Next to union and communion with my God, nothing could afford me such high satisfaction. I hasten to Asia with alacrity and joy; and yet I must confess, that if the clouds had been ever so obscure—if all human aid had apparently been withdrawn from those missions, the interests of which are so interwoven with the very strings of my heart, my divine call to Asia has been so indubitably clear, that I should have been obliged to have thrown every thing into the hands of my God, and to have said to him, "Here I am; send me" to Asia.

"Our fleet, when we set sail, consisted of a line-of-battle ship of 74 guns, two frigates, a sloop of war, six regular Indiamen, two country Indiamen, (ships built in India,) and about twenty-five smaller merchantmen. The sight of such a floating city is very agreeable; and would be peculiarly desirable, were it not that the lagging ships, which must be frequently waited for, lengthen out the voyage. On a calm, the boats are passing and re-passing from ship to ship. Each of the large ships has its telegraph, composed of colours of various hues and shapes; and by these telegraphs, they convey messages or other

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intelligence one to the other in a surprising manner; and frequently they compare their respective longitudes.

“In leaving England we came very near the coast of Cornwall. We were a little surprised at the movements of our Commodore, as he certainly went out of his way. But we were satisfied when we found that he moved towards the coast to receive some important dispatches from Falmouth. Had it been the Divine will, I should have been glad to have spent a few days with my friends in that part of Cornwall; and more particularly so, because to our generous friends in that county, if we except London and the north, our missions are more indebted than to any other people in the world.

“1814.—January the 6th.—Now our winter-gales commenced, and dreadful they were almost from the Land’s End till we had sailed some degrees beyond Madeira.—Many of our ships were more or less dismasted. The *Cabalva* suffered very little: a single little mast at the end of one of the booms alone was broke. On the 19th of January one of the merchant ships was missing, and was not afterwards seen or heard of. What made this incident still more melancholy was, that she had been firing guns of distress for some time before; but the gale was so violent that no relief could be afforded her.

“January the 24th.—The gale was not abated, and six ships more are missing. One of these is a country Indianman, the *Fort William*, of twelve hundred tons burden. The Commodore has sent one of the frigates in search of them. What is most alarming is, that the *Fort William* was in great distress. She seemed quite unmanageable. There is great reason to fear that she is lost.

“January the 26th.—No tidings of the missing ships. We have now given up all hopes of again seeing the frigate which was dispatched in search of them: not that

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we have any doubts concerning the safety of the frigate; but have little reason to expect that she will find us out in the great ocean, as the violent gales have tossed us about in all directions. What a wonderful Providence! The *Fort William* was the first ship I visited in London, and I had serious thoughts of taking a passage in it for myself and all my companions, as it would have saved us a considerable sum of money. But my brethren urged that it was entirely manned (the officers excepted) by Lascars, who could not be depended on in times of danger, in the management of so large a ship, without a mixture of British tars among them. This argument was strengthened on our return from the East India Docks to Poplar, where we were informed that, just before a party of these very Lascars had been fighting with knives, and that one of them had been stabbed to death in the scuffle. Indeed, the most intelligent of naval affairs of the company in our ship are of opinion that her distress, and most probably the entire loss of her, was owing to her being manned only by Lascars: for she was a very fine ship, and, alas! was full of passengers! Praised be God that he delivered us; for had all my companions and myself been lost, it might have suspended any further attempts of the Methodists to establish missions in Asia for many years.

“ We have among our passengers a Chinese gentleman, whose name is Luncheon, or at least Luncheon gives us the exact English sound of his name. He sailed from China in an American ship, bound to the United States, with about 2,500 pounds worth of tea; but the ship was captured by one of our armed vessels, and carried to England. On this, either our government, or the Honourable East India Company, (I think the latter, as far as I could learn from Mr. Luncheon, who speaks very little

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English,) purchased the tea of the captors, sold it, and gave the produce to Mr. Luncheon, because he was a Chinese. However *political* the step might be, I doubt whether there be another country in the world which would act in so *generous* a manner.

“ I happened to mention how pleased I was with the singing of some canary birds, on one of my voyages to America; on which the steward brought me a canary bird, and hung it up in my study, within about a yard of my elbow-chair. The little creature sings so sweetly, and is so entertaining, that I have given him the name of *Dick*, which he seems now to be well acquainted with.

“ About this time one of our soldiers died, and after the burial service was read, his corpse was consigned in his hammock, made heavy with sand, to a watery grave.

“ One morning, dreadful shrieks were heard from the lower deck. They came from a woman, whose husband, a soldier, was beating her severely. She then flew up stairs, and, as soon as she got upon deck, gave herself a fling over the side of the ship; but a sailor caught her by a part of her clothes, and, with great difficulty, drew her back. The husband was brought to trial before the Captain; but some circumstances appeared so much in disfavour of the woman, as made the Captain consider the husband as almost justified.

“ Another accusation was brought before the Captain against a soldier for abusing a Major in the army, one of the passengers. The charge was proved, and the soldier received twenty-four lashes for his fault.

“ Those who were on the poop of our ship had the melancholy sight of a sailior, belonging to another vessel, falling from the top-gallant-yard into the sea. It does not appear that he could have been saved by any exertions which might have been used: so he was drowned.

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“ On one fine day a fleet of forty ships crossed us. It formed a very grand sight. Our Captain held a long conversation by the means of trumpets, with the Commodore of the fleet as he was passing; by whom he was informed that they were bound for Lisbon and the Mediterranean.

“ One day a signal was made by our Commodore that the only remaining frigate, the *Revolutionaire*, would soon be in want of water; that she had only a month's water on board, and therefore would be obliged to leave the fleet and sail for some port, unless she could receive a supply. Instantly the telegraphs began to work, and she soon found that the fleet would grant her a full supply. Our Captain alone sent her sixteen hundred gallons, and the other ships in proportion.

“ We have caught two *sharks* and a *boneta-fish*. The former were caught by a hook, the latter by a harpoon. The *sharks* were eaten up by the sailors. The *boneta*, which weighed only 16 pounds, was brought to our table: it is a coarse, well-tasted fish; and variety made it pleasant.

“ Nine of our fleet have left us for Lisbon. They are store-ships for the Marquis of Wellington's army: and we have reason to hope will arrive safe at their destined port. Both the Commodore and I believe the whole fleet wished to touch at Madeira, and to continue there for a few days. I got many letters ready to be sent from thence to England. But, alas! we just came within sight of it, and the violent gales obliged us to wear off for the south.— On the 25th of January we had a short view of Palma, one of the Canary islands.

“ Mrs. Harvard passed through a long series of violent sea-sickness. But, since we have come between the tropics, she has perfectly recovered, and is, I think upon the whole, even better for all her illness. But, alas! this was not the case with Mrs. Ault. When she arrived at Ports-

mouth she was very much indisposed, of which I knew nothing before. An eminent physician (Dr. Waller) was employed to attend her, who most kindly and gratuitously gave her all the assistance in his power. Her dear husband, as was very natural, apprehended no immediate danger; and Dr. Waller was reluctant to give him pain. But the Doctor informed my worthy friends, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, at whose house I resided while at Portsmouth, that she was in the last stage of a consumption; and that he had not the least hopes of her life, unless the Torrid Zone could restore her. He was sure, he said, that she would soon die on land, and that he expected she would soon die at sea; but that, if she survived to reach the Tropics, there was a possibility and that a very bare one, of her recovery. This was the purport of Dr. Waller's opinion, which I believe he gave to Mr. and Mrs. Webb, that they might deliver it to me. My way then was clear. To part with so very excellent and valuable a man as Mr. Ault, when there was no human possibility of Mrs. Ault's recovery on land, would have been almost an unpardonable step: and to have left her behind, when the only possible means of her recovery (*humanly speaking*) was to take her, if possible, to the tropical climate, would have been very inexcusable.

“The Messrs. Harvard and Clough, and myself who sailed in the *Cabalva* were exceedingly desirous to know the progress of Mrs. Ault's sickness, and therefore agreed with our brethren of the *Lady Melville* that intelligence should be conveyed by means of different coloured handkerchiefs, whenever our ships, in the different movements of the fleet, should come near each other. But, alas! all the intelligence thus received was of a melancholy nature. Mrs. Ault reached the tropical climate: she held out till we arrived pretty near the Equinoctial line. On Febru-

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ary 5th, during a calm, Messrs. Ault and Squance borrowed their Captain's boat, and made us a visit. The interview, as may be supposed, was both pleasing and painful. Mrs. Ault was still alive, and Mr. Ault was even then indulging some faint hopes that the Torrid Zone, under the Divine blessing, would restore her.

"Mr. Squance, I must here observe, gave us a pleasing account of the influence of religion, in the *Lady Melville*, among the cabin passengers. There were eight officers of the army, of very respectable rank in the ship, who had (as far as I could learn from his modest account) taken a liking to the manners, address and conversation of Mr. Squance; so far as to offer him their very large cabin, on the second deck, to preach in on Sunday evenings. The cabin, at those times, was crowded; and good, I doubt not, was done. As to our own ship, I hope to have something good to say of it when we reach Bombay.

"February the 10th.—We were all at breakfast, and an officer of our ship came in and informed us that several ships had hoisted their flag half-mast-high, as a signal of death. Our signal was immediately hoisted. But our whole company, who had previously known of Mrs. Ault's illness, concluded that the signals were raised on account of her death. The signals all continued half-mast-high till about half an hour before sun-set, when the *Lady Melville* lifted up her death signal top-mast-high, which was followed by all the fleet. This was the signal that the officiating minister (who was Mr. Squance) had begun to read the 15th chapter of the 1st Epistle of Corinthians. And when the *Lady Melville* had dropped down her signal, the rest of the fleet followed her example; and thus ended the ceremony.

"A few days after this, Mr. Harvard and Mr. Clough took the advantage of a calm, and visited our friends in

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the *Lady Melville*. I am so old, that I dare not venture up and down the sides of ships but as little as possible. I hazarded my life in visiting the ships in the East India Docks, near London, to find out ships for myself and my companions. Mr. Harvard and Mr. Clough found Mr. Ault humbly resigned, though feeling exquisitely on the occasion. His dear wife died triumphant in the faith: and her resignation was most entire. When her husband spoke to her relative to having her remains preserved and carried to Bombay for interment, she answered in words similar to these: "O no: let me be buried in the ocean. It matters but little what becomes of the *mortal part*, so that the *immortal—the soul* be secure!" When she became speechless, she testified her victory over the last enemy, by lifting up her hand in a most triumphant manner; and she continued sensible to the last. When she was at Portsmouth, she certainly did not apprehend herself to be in immediate danger, as she observed to Mrs. Harvard, when speaking to her on the subject, that she thought Mr. Ault would die before her.

"On February the 19th, Captain Burgoyne, of the *Port Mahon* brig of war, most kindly came on board to inform us that in a few days he should set sail for the Brazils, with a fleet of our merchantmen, which are bound for Rio Janeiro; and that he would deliver any letters we should entrust to his care, to the British Consul, to be forwarded to England by the first packet. I must therefore now conclude, having, indeed, brought down our voyage to the present day, February 21st, 1814."

I shall now close this account by giving the substance of the Doctor's Will, which he made and executed but a few weeks before he left England.

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*An Extract from the WILL of the late Reverend
THOMAS COKE, LL. D.*

The Doctor, by his Will, dated the 27th of November, 1813, and published in the name of the Holy Trinity, after devising his real estate to his trustees, without expressing any trust concerning the same; and bequeathing, out of his personal estate, two sums of £2000, and £100, to two friends; with rings of the value of two guineas each, to the several friends therein named; *gave and bequeathed* to Mr. Samuel Drew, of St. Austell, in Cornwall, all his printed books which should be in his possession at the time of the Doctor's decease; (but not his manuscripts); and disposed of the residue of his personal estate, (which appears by the sum under which the executors have proved the Will—£12,500, to be very considerable) in the following manner:—"And as, to, and concerning all the rest, residue, and remainder, of my personal estate, and effects, of what nature, kind, or quality, the same may consist, and wheresoever the same may be, I give and bequeath the same, and every part thereof, unto the treasurer for the time being of a certain Benefit Society, instituted by the Conference of the people called Methodists, late in connexion with the Rev. John Wesley, deceased, called "*The Itinerant Methodist Preachers' Annuity.*" The rules and regulations of which Society, were first registered in the city and county of Bristol, at a court of the General Quarter Sessions, held July 15th, 1799, and such rules and regulations having been altered, were again registered at the General Quarter Sessions of the aforesaid city and county, held January 17th, 1800, and the same rules and regulations were again altered and amended at a Conference, held in Liverpool by adjournment, from July, to August, 1813, to be added to the

Extract from Dr. Coke's Will.

general funds of the said Society, for the use thereof, according to the rules and regulations to which the same is, or may become subject."

In his Will, the Doctor expressed his particular desire to be buried in the priory church in the town of Brecon, South Wales, in the same vault with his two late wives; and he earnestly requested his friend Mr. John Holloway, and his other two executors, to see his wishes, in that respect, strictly complied with; and he appointed John Holloway of the City-road, in the county of Middlesex, Esq. Robert Carr Brackenbury, of Raithby Hall, Lincolnshire, Esq. and Thomas Roberts, of the city of Bath, Esq. joint executors of his Will.

I shall close this chapter with lists of the preachers, both dead and alive, arranged in three classes. The *first* contains the names of those now employed by the conference, with the years in which they began to travel. The *second*, the names of those who have died in the work since its commencement, with the years when they set out, and when they died, on the left and right side of the names, as far as I could collect with any tolerable certainty. But in this list very probably there will be some inaccuracies. The *third* list records the names of those who departed from the work, or settled in trade as local preachers, such as have been, at different periods, expelled or discontinued.

A Chronological List, alphabetically arranged, of Itinerant Preachers, now in connexion of the late Rev. J. Wesley, deceased, with the years in which they began to preach.

A

1765 ASHMAN, William
 1766 Asbury, Francis
 1775 Allum, Duncan Mac
 1781 Atmore, Charles
 1782 Armstrong, Gustavus
 1783 Armstrong, Joseph
 1787 Armstrong, Francis
 1789 Anderson, James
 1790 Aver, William
 1791 Anderson, Henry
 1791 Armstrong, William
 1792 Arthur, John Mac
 1792 Alcorn, Samuel
 1794 Alexander, James
 1796 Aikenhead, John
 1797 Averill, Adam
 1797 Atherton, William
 1801 Adam, John Mac
 1802 Ashton, Thomas
 1804 Andrews, Lewis
 1804 Asher, John
 1806 Allen, James
 1808 Abbott, John
 1808 Anwyl, Edward
 1808 Armstrong, Joseph
 1808 Ault, William
 1809 Akerman, James
 1809 Appleyard, John
 1809 Armitage, John
 1810 Agar, Joseph
 1810 Allen, Richard
 1810 Appleton, William
 1810 Adshead, Charles
 1811 Arnett, Thomas
 1811 Ash, William
 1812 Anderson, John
 1813 Allen, John, D.
 1813 Arnet, Thomas
 1814 Andrews, Benjamin

B

1760 Brown, Isaac
 1768 Bardsley, Samuel

1771 Benson, Joseph
 1774 Bradburn, Samuel
 1774 Brettel, Jeremiah
 1776 Brown, George
 1778 Brown, Jonathan
 1779 Booth, John
 1779 Button, George
 1779 Barber, Thomas
 1782 Bogie, James
 1782 Bartholomew, Thomas
 1782 Barber, John
 1784 Brackenbury, Robert C.
 1785 Byron, James M.
 1786 Black, William
 1786 Bramwell, William
 1786 Barrett, John
 1786 Beaumont, John
 1790 Braithwaite, John
 1790 Burgess, Joseph
 1790 Brown, Thomas
 1791 Bell, James
 1791 Buckley, James
 1792 Bridgnell, James
 1792 Banks, Robert
 1792 Bowes, Joseph
 1793 Barker, Jonathan
 1794 Brownell, John
 1795 Blanshard, Thomas
 1795 Brookhouse, Joseph
 1796 Burley, James
 1796 Burdsall, John
 1799 Bunting, Jabez
 1800 Bennett, William
 1800 Bailey, Robert
 1801 Beswick, William
 1801 Bryan, John
 1801 Bradnock, Isaac
 1802 Butler, Stephen
 1803 Breedon, William
 1803 Blackett, James
 1803 Banks, Edward
 1804 Barr, William
 1804 Bumstead, John
 1804 Batten, William

Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

1805 Burton, James D.
 1805 Bedford, John
 1805 Brown, Jonathan, jun.
 1805 Burrows, Michael
 1806 Bird, William
 1806 Britain, Joseph
 1806 Bamford, Stephen
 1806 Barton, King
 1806 Bellamy, George
 1807 Bumstead, James
 1807 Barrett, Benjamin
 1807 Brown, John, jun.
 1807 Barlow, Luke
 1807 Burgess, Francis
 1807 Bustard, John
 1808 Baker, William
 1808 Bate, James
 1808 Brocklehurst, William
 1808 Batty, Edward
 1808 Bryan, Joshua
 1809 Banwell, George
 1809 Bryant, John
 1809 Bursey, Thomas
 1809 Beale, William
 1809 Blanshard, William
 1809 Bromwich, Joseph
 1809 Burrows, Joseph
 1810 Burton, Charles
 1810 Beech, Hugh
 1811 Blackburn, Thomas
 1811 Bramley, James
 1811 Bell, John
 1811 Boddycoat, Joseph
 1812 Bennett, John
 1812 Bridgman, Thomas
 1812 Betham, Robert
 1812 Burley, George
 1812 Bacon, William
 1812 Busby, Sampson
 1812 Burgess, Joseph, jun.
 1812 Blundell, William
 1812 Bicknell, John
 1812 Brooks, James
 1812 Ballinghall, Thomas
 1813 Barrett, Thomas
 1813 Barker, George
 1813 Beaumont, Joseph
 1813 Bowers, John
 1813 Boothby, Jeremiah
 1814 Baker, James
 1814 Bryant, Robert
 1814 Bugar, John
 1814 Burges, William

C

1776 Creighton, James
 1780 Cole, Joseph
 1781 Cooper, Thomas
 1782 Clarke, Adam
 1783 Crosby, John
 1784 Crowther, Timothy
 1784 Crowther, Jonathan
 1787 Cornock, William Mac
 1789 Crowther, Robert
 1793 Crozier, Robert
 1795 Collier, Joseph
 1796 Clandennin, John
 1797 Collier, Francis
 1797 Chittle, John
 1797 Campbell, Archibald
 1797 Carter, James
 1798 Campbell, Daniel
 1798 Cleg, John
 1799 Claxton, Marshal
 1801 Clayton, Isaac
 1802 Cutchen, James Mac
 1802 Cord, Charles Mac
 1804 Chapman, Edward
 1804 Crook, William
 1804 Cousin, Michael
 1804 Clements, Castor
 1805 Carter, Hugh
 1806 Copeland, William
 1806 Coates, John
 1807 Cheverton, Henry
 1807 Cusworth, Joseph
 1808 Carson, Robert
 1808 Calder, Frederick
 1808 Cornock, Charles Mac
 1808 Carlton, William
 1808 Clegg, William
 1808 Cloake, John Warwick
 1809 Cullen, John
 1809 Cooke, Corbett
 1810 Chapman, Joseph
 1810 Crosscomb, William
 1810 Carey, John
 1811 Cubain, Edward
 1811 Crabtree, Abraham
 1812 Clarke, George
 1813 Catton, William
 1813 Clough, Benjamin
 1813 Crumpton, John
 1813 Cubit, George
 1814 Constable, William

*Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.***D**

1769 Dixon, Thomas
 1780 Day, Simon
 1784 Donald, James Mac
 1785 Dennen, John
 1787 Dall, Robert
 1789 Denton, John
 1789 Davies, Owen
 1790 Dean, John
 1790 Doncaster, John
 1790 Downing, Blakeley
 1791 Deverell, George
 1792 Dermott, George
 1793 Douglass, George
 1794 Daniel, Mark
 1794 Drake, Joseph
 1796 Douglass, William
 1796 Deakins, David
 1799 Decry, Henry
 1802 Davies, John
 1802 Derry, Francis
 1802 Draper, C. John
 1803 Doolittle, Thomas W.
 1803 Dowty, Thomas
 1805 Davies, William
 1806 Dixon, William
 1806 Dace, John
 1806 Dunbar, James
 1806 Davies, John, jun.
 1807 Davies, Samuel
 1808 Downing, Samuel
 1808 Dowell, Samuel Mac
 1808 Day, Mark
 1808 Davies, Thomas
 1809 Dalby, William
 1809 Dixon, Miles C.
 1809 Davies, William, jun.
 1809 Dawes, Mark
 1809 Dodd, Thomas
 1809 Dowson, William
 1810 Dunn, Moses
 1811 Day, Matthew
 1812 Davis, John
 1812 Dunning, Joseph
 1812 Dixon, James
 1813 Drudges, John
 1814 Davidson, James

E

1782 Edmondson, Jonathan
 1786 Evans, James
 1787 Entwisle, Joseph
 1791 Emett, Michael

1795 Edman, Thomas
 1797 Edwards, Thomas
 1801 Elwarn, George Mac
 1803 Etchells, James
 1805 Evans, William
 1806 Everett, James
 1807 Ellis, William
 1808 Edwards, Evan
 1809 Erskine, George
 1809 Elliot, Nathaniel
 1810 Evans, David
 1811 Emmett, Robert
 1812 Eastwood, Thomas
 1812 Elliot, John
 1812 Edens, William, H. L.
 1813 Edwards, William
 1813 Eland, Richard
 1813 Ellidge, Richard
 1814 Eckersley, Thomas

F

1785 Fish, William
 1788 Furniss, John
 1790 Fearnley, Thomas
 1790 Ferguson, William
 1796 Farrar, John
 1798 Fowler, William
 1799 Fielding, Joshua
 1800 Foster, John
 1802 Fairbourne, John
 1802 France, William
 1804 Floyd, Aaron
 1804 Fletcher, Thomas
 1807 Ferrar, Abraham E.
 1807 Fearnside, Joshua
 1808 Frank, Joseph
 1810 Flint, William
 1810 Finlay, William
 1811 Fowler, Joseph
 1811 Fox, William B.
 1811 Fussel, James, jun.
 1812 Fowler, James
 1812 Frazer, Donald
 1813 Fordred, John
 1814 Freeman, Ambrose

G

1780 Gibbon, George
 1784 Griffith, Walter
 1785 Gaulter, John
 1786 Gill, Thomas
 1787 Gates, Samuel
 1790 Gibbon, Edward
 1790 Graham, Charles

Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

1792 Gower, Richard
 1793 Gloyne, Charles
 1795 Greenly, Charles
 1795 Gill, James
 1798 Gellard, George
 1798 Gee, Thomas
 1799 Garrett, Philip
 1799 Gilpin, William
 1800 Gartrell, James
 1800 Gregory, Benjamin
 1802 Graham, Thomas
 1803 Games, Stephen
 1804 Gillgrass, William
 1804 Green, Edward F.
 1806 Grindred, Edmund
 1806 Gill, John
 1807 Garbutt, Thomas
 1807 Gostick, Joseph
 1808 Goodwin, Josiah
 1808 Griffith, William
 1808 Gilchrist, William
 1809 Griffith Joseph
 1809 Griffin, John
 1811 Griffith, Morgan
 1812 Gaskell, John
 1812 Garner, Robert
 1814 Green, Thomas
 1814 Green, W. John
 1814 Greenwood, Richard

H

1770 Horner, William
 1780 Hopkins, Robert
 1782 Holmes, William
 1782 Holder, George
 1785 Hunter, William
 1786 Highfield, George
 1787 Harrison, Robert
 1788 Hickling, John
 1788 Hamilton, William
 1789 Hutton, Thomas
 1789 Hamilton, Andrew, jun.
 1790 Harrison, Thomas
 1790 Hainsworth, William
 1791 Hardcastle, Philip
 1792 Hardacre, Richard
 1793 Hudson, John
 1794 Hicks, William
 1794 Howorth, William
 1794 Hutchinson, Arthur
 1794 Hamilton, John
 1795 Hill, Josiah
 1796 Hughes, John

1797 Hodgson, John
 1797 Henshaw, William
 1798 Hare, Edward
 1798 Hodson, John
 1802 Howe, John
 1802 Hansbrow, George
 1803 Hadden, John
 1804 Hill, William
 1804 Harrison, William
 1805 Hanwell, John
 1805 Haime, Charles
 1805 Hopewell, James
 1805 Hughes, William
 1805 Hughes, Griffith
 1806 Hinson, William
 1806 Hopwood, Henry, S.
 1806 Harrison, William, jun.
 1806 Heaton, James
 1806 Humphreys, Robert
 1807 Hughes, Evan
 1807 Hughes, Hugh
 1807 Hyde, James
 1807 Harrison, John
 1807 Homer, William
 1807 Harper, Samuel
 1808 Hope, Samuel
 1808 Holroyd, James
 1808 Hollingsworth, Joseph
 1808 Hill, Thomas
 1808 Hughes, Lot
 1809 Hayman, William
 1809 Hollis, Edward
 1810 Harding, William
 1810 Hewitt, Thomas
 1810 Hudson, Benjamin
 1810 Harman, Joshua
 1810 Harvard, William
 1811 Hunt, Joseph
 1811 Hobson, John
 1811 Heap, John
 1811 Hulmes, Charles
 1811 Hiley, Benjamin
 1811 Hutton, Joseph
 1811 Hall, Thomas
 1812 Hawthorn, Charles
 1812 Henwood, Oliver
 1812 Hayes, Robert
 1812 Haswell, Partes
 1812 Harrison, Robert, jun.
 1812 Hurst, Thomas
 1813 Harris, Thomas
 1813 Heap, Richard
 1814 Hannah, John

Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

I

1778 Jackson, Daniel
 1783 Johnson, Robert
 1788 Jenkins, William
 1789 Irwin, James
 1791 Jay, James
 1792 Jordan, James
 1793 Ingham, Thomas
 1797 Jenkin, William
 1797 Johnson, Thomas
 1798 James, Robert
 1800 Jagger, Jonas
 1800 Isaac, Daniel
 1801 Jordan, John
 1802 Jones, John
 1802 Jones, Edward (1.)
 1803 Jones, William
 1804 Jones, Edward (2.)
 1804 Jackson, Thomas
 1804 Johnston, George
 1805 Johnson, James
 1805 Jones, Edward (3.)
 1806 Jackson, Samuel
 1806 Jones, Maurice
 1806 Irvine, John C.
 1807 Jones, David
 1807 James, John
 1807 Jamieson, Philip
 1807 Jones, Robert
 1808 Jones, Edward (4.)
 1808 James, James
 1808 Jones, James
 1808 Jones, William
 1808 Jackson, Robert
 1808 Jones, William
 1808 Jones, William, jun.
 1808 Jones, Robert
 1808 Johnson, James
 1808 Jones, Owen
 1809 Jones, Robert, jun.
 1809 Jones, Humphrey
 1809 Johnson, Edward
 1810 Jewett, William
 1810 Jones, Lewis
 1810 Jones, David, jun.
 1811 James, John, jun.
 1811 Jackson, William
 1811 Ingham, John
 1812 Jones, James, jun.
 1812 Jackson, Thomas, jun.
 1812 Jackson, Daniel, jun.
 1812 Jones, John

1814 Jackson, John
 1814 Jarratt, James

K

1782 Kerr, John
 1783 King, John
 1783 Kane, Lawrence
 1786 Kay, Duncan
 1787 Kerr, Thomas
 1788 Kelk, Thomas
 1789 Kershaw, John
 1791 Kirkpatrick, Cleland
 1793 Kee, James Mac
 1794 Keown, James Mac
 1797 Knowles, John
 1799 Kidd, William
 1799 Kittle, Samuel
 1799 Kitchin, Joseph
 1802 Kershaw, Lawrence
 1803 Kittrick, William Mac
 1806 Knowlan, James
 1806 Keys, William
 1806 Kyle, Samuel
 1807 Kemp, John
 1808 Keeling, John
 1809 Kaye, William
 1809 Key, Thomas
 1810 Killan, James
 1811 Keeling, Isaac
 1811 Kellott, Samuel
 1812 Kerpezdron, D. Armand
 1813 King, James

L

1783 Lumb, Matthew
 1786 Lessey, Theophilus
 1788 Lowe, George
 1788 Leggatt, Benjamin
 1790 Lilly, Isaac
 1794 Langtree, Matthew
 1795 Leppington, John C.
 1796 Laycock, Thomas
 1799 Leach, William
 1801 Longhead, Thomas
 1803 Lee, John
 1804 Lancaster, John
 1807 Lomas, John A.
 1808 Lisk, Joseph
 1808 Lessey, Theophilus, jun.
 1808 Lear, Samuel
 1808 Lynch, James
 1810 Ludlam, Thomas
 1181 Laker, William

Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

1811 Lord, William
 1812 Le Sueur, Peter
 1812 Levell, William
 1812 Leigh, Samuel
 1813 Lill, William
 1814 Lewis, John

M

1770 Mowatt, George
 1777 Myles, William
 1779 Moore, Henry
 1786 Mann, John
 1787 Mann, James
 1787 Miller, Robert
 1788 Murphy, Michael
 1788 Moore, Alexander
 1789 Martindale, Miles
 1790 Murdock, Archibald
 1791 Mahy, Henry
 1792 Morley, George
 1793 Marsden, George
 1794 Moulton, William
 1794 Milward, Edward
 1794 Mullen, Daniel Mac
 1794 Muff, Isaac
 1796 Mayne, Charles
 1798 Midgeley, William
 1798 Maugre, Nicholas
 1799 Miller, W. Edward
 1800 Mercer, John
 1800 Marsden, Joshua
 1800 Mahon, George
 1801 Meek, Joseph
 1802 Maurice, John
 1803 Melsom, Robert
 1803 Milman, Benjamin
 1804 Martin, William
 1804 Martin, Thomas
 1806 Mole, James
 1807 Marsh, Joseph
 1808 Mann, Joseph
 1808 Moody, Richard
 1808 Morgan, Thomas
 1808 Mallinson, Matthew
 1809 Mack, Robert
 1809 Morgan, Elijah
 1809 Morgan, Webster
 1810 Martin, Richard
 1811 McLaughlin, Archibald
 1811 Mucklow, William
 1811 Mason, John, jun.
 1811 Moorhouse, George
 1812 Mowatt, William

1812 Mainwaring, George
 1812 Mortimer, James
 1812 Moxon, Thomas
 1812 Massaron, Robert
 1812 Mattison, Joseph
 1812 Morton, Thomas
 1812 Miller, James
 1813 Milne, John
 1813 Morris, John
 1813 Morris, Seth
 1813 Morton, Robert
 1813 Moxon, Richard
 1814 Motier, John
 1814 Methley, James

N

1789 Nelson, John
 1799 Newton, Robert
 1799 Needham, James
 1801 Nesbitt, John
 1802 Naylor, William
 1802 Nicholl, David Mac
 1803 Nother, William
 1803 Newton, Jacob
 1804 Newton, John
 1808 Newton, Thomas,
 1810 Newby, Thomas
 1810 Nicholson, John,
 1810 Noble, Arthur
 1811 Nicholson, Robert
 1813 Newton, Christopher

O

1782 Ogilvie, John
 1799 Ouseley, Gideon
 1803 Oliver, Amice
 1804 Owen, Griffith
 1805 Oliffe, James
 1808 Odgers, James
 1811 Oven, Robert
 1812 Oliver, Henry
 1813 Orchard, Paul
 1813 Overton, John
 1814 Oaks, Edward
 1814 Osborne, Thomas

P

1784 Parkin, Jonathan
 1784 Palmer, William
 1789 Paterson, Thomas
 1790 Pope, John S.
 1791 Patterson, Richard
 1793 Penman, James

Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

1793¹ Phillips, John
 1794 Pearson, William, sen.
 1795 Pedlow, Daniel
 1796 Parsons, Humphrey
 1798 Pattison, Thomas
 1798 Preston, Thomas
 1799 Poole, John
 1799 Pindar, Thomas
 1800 Pearson, William, jun.
 1803 Pilter, Robert
 1805 Phillips, Richard
 1805 Pollard, Thomas
 1806 Parry, Evan
 1806 Padman, Thomas
 1807 Pretty, Joseph
 1808 Potts, Francis Brook
 1808 Pratt, James C.
 1808 Price, Richard
 1809 Poole, George
 1809 Prosser, Joseph
 1810 Pearce, Peter
 1810 Phenix, Isaac
 1810 Pearson, John
 1810 Posnett, Leonard
 1810 Priestley, James
 1811 Parry, Stephen
 1811 Prescott, Peter
 1812 Porter, Jonathan
 1812 Peckavant, John
 1813 Powis, Henry
 1814 Pope, Henry

Q

1795 Queteville, John De

R

1766 Rhodes, Benjamin
 1770 Rodda, Richard
 1785 Ridall, James
 1786 Roberts, Thomas
 1786 Reynolds, John
 1787 Reece, Richard
 1788 Rogerson, Thomas
 1788 Riles, John
 1789 Ridgeway, Thomas
 1792 Robbins, Joseph
 1794 Russel, Francis
 1795 Rought, Thomas
 1799 Rogers, Thomas
 1799 Revel, Marmaduke
 1799 Roberts, Edward
 1799 Reynolds, John, jun.
 1799 Rossell, John

1800 Ransom, Hugh
 1801 Radcliffe, William
 1802 Russel, George
 1802 Rutledge, James
 1803 Rawlings, Philip
 1803 Roberts, Robert
 1803 Radford, William
 1803 Remmington, John
 1805 Rogers, David
 1806 Robinson, Joseph
 1807 Rowe, John
 1807 Rogers, John
 1807 Rennison, William
 1807 Radford, John
 1808 Roberts, Richard
 1808 Rigg, John
 1808 Roadhouse, John
 1808 Rawson, John
 1808 Rowe, George
 1808 Roberts, Jonathan
 1809 Rees, Owen
 1809 Rutledge, William
 1810 Rolfe, Thomas
 1810 Radcliffe, Charles
 1810 Reiley, William
 1811 Raby, John
 1812 Reed, Francis C.
 1812 Ransom, Henry
 1813 Rayner, Jonathan
 1813 Rowland, Thomas
 1814 Roberts, Joseph

S

1763 Story, George
 1768 Shadford, George
 1777 Saunders, William
 1779 Suter, Alexander
 1785 Smith, John
 1786 Sutcliffe, Joseph
 1787 Stamp, John
 1788 Stewart, Matthew
 1788 Smith, Robert
 1790 Sargent, George
 1790 Simeonite, Thomas
 1790 Sykes, George
 1790 Shelmerdine, William
 1790 Simpson, John
 1790 Smith, William
 1790 Steele, Samuel
 1791 Smith, George
 1792 Smith, Robert
 1792 Smith, James
 1792 Stephens, John

Cronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1793 Scholefield, James | 1812 Shackelton, William |
| 1793 Shaw, Edmund | 1812 Stewart, Ebenezer |
| 1793 Seckerson, Anthony B. | 1813 Smith, Joseph |
| 1793 Stephenson, George | 1813 Savage, Thomas |
| 1794 Simmonds, Caleb | 1813 Sharp, William |
| 1794 Stewart, John | 1813 Shoar, James |
| 1795 Stanley, Thomas | 1813 Strong, John |
| 1795 Sturgeon, Alexander | 1813 Stewart, James, W. |
| 1796 Sidserf, John | 1814 Sheriff, James |
| 1797 Stanley, Jacob | 1814 Stoner, David |
| 1798 Slinger, Thomas | 1814 Staton, Thomas |
| 1799 Slack, John | |
| 1799 Stewart, James | T |
| 1800 Stewart, William | 1761 Taylor, Thomas |
| 1801 Sterling, James | 1777 Taylor, Joseph |
| 1802 Simmons, John | 1781 Tattersall, Thomas |
| 1802 Strong, Robert | 1786 Townsend, John |
| 1803 Sykes, James | 1787 Truscott, Francis |
| 1803 Sewell, Samuel | 1788 Tunnicliffe, Charles |
| 1803 Scholefield, William | 1790 Taylor, Samuel |
| 1803 Sidserf, James | 1790 Trethewey, Thomas |
| 1803 Slater, Barnard | 1792 Trefry, Richard |
| 1804 Sutcliffe, William | 1792 Tobias, Matthew |
| 1804 Slugg, Thomas | 1794 Turton, William |
| 1805 Simpson, John, jun. | 1794 Towler, Edward |
| 1806 Sibley, Nicholas | 1794 Timperley, William |
| 1806 Sleep, William | 1794 Turner, Edward |
| 1806 Smetham, Richard | 1796 Townley, James |
| 1806 Squarebridge, John | 1796 Taylor, Andrew |
| 1806 Skelton, Thomas | 1798 Tinton, Isaac |
| 1806 Spink, James | 1798 Taylor, John |
| 1807 Sykes, George, jun. | 1801 Trampleasure, William |
| 1807 Simpson, Thomas | 1801 Taft, Zach. |
| 1808 Stephenson, Humphrey | 1802 Taft, Henry |
| 1808 Saunders, Joseph | 1802 Thompson, George |
| 1808 Sedgwick, John | 1802 Thompson, Edward |
| 1808 Sleigh, William | 1803 Tranter, William |
| 1808 Smith, John, jun. | 1803 Taylor, Joseph, jun. |
| 1809 Sugden, James | 1804 Triffet, Anthony |
| 1809 Sugden, Samuel | 1804 Toase, William |
| 1809 Storry, John | 1804 Todd, William |
| 1809 Shaw, Jervis | 1806 Twiddy, Thomas |
| 1809 Shaw, Barnabas | 1807 Towers, William |
| 1809 Stones, William | 1808 Tomlinson, Richard |
| 1810 Shipman, John | 1808 Toogood, William |
| 1811 Stokes, William | 1808 Talboys, Thomas |
| 1811 Slater, John | 1808 Tuck, Henry |
| 1811 Smith, William | 1809 Thomas, Thomas |
| 1811 Scott, John | 1809 Thomas, Owen |
| 1811 Scurrah, Ralph | 1809 Thompson, Thomas |
| 1812 Squance, Thomas | 1810 Taylor, William |
| 1812 Smetham, Thomas | 1810 Thomas, James |
| 1812 Stead, James | 1810 Theobald, William |

Chronological List of Preachers now in Connexion.

1810 Thompson, John
 1811 Turner, Jonathan
 1811 Taylor, Richard
 1813 Thomas, Joseph
 1814 Tindale, George

V

1775 Vasey, Thomas, sen.
 1795 Vaughan, Martin
 1801 Vasey, Thomas, jun.
 1814 Veevers, William

W

1767 Wittam, John
 1769 Wrigley, Francis
 1770 Watson, James
 1773 Wood, James
 1779 Warrener, William
 1780 West, William
 1787 Woodrow, John
 1787 Wood, Thomas
 1788 Witshaw, John
 1789 Wood, Samuel
 1791 Wilson, Stephen
 1792 Ward, John
 1793 West, Francis
 1793 Waddy, Richard
 1795 Wood, John
 1796 Whiteside, Cuthbert
 1796 Worrill, Zach.
 1797 Woolmer, Samuel
 1797 Walmsley, John
 1798 Welburn, William
 1798 Wilton, Thomas
 1799 Wintle, Richard
 1800 Waugh, David
 1801 Ward, Valentine
 1801 Wilson, Maximilian
 1801 Wheeler, Robert
 1802 Waller, James
 1802 Warren, Samuel
 1803 Woodall, William
 1804 Walker, Josiah
 1804 Weir, Alexander
 1804 Wilson, Joseph
 1804 Womersley, Joseph

1805 Williams, Jonathan
 1805 Warren, Thomas
 1805 Walton, John
 1805 Worth, William
 1805 Wright, John
 1805 Wheelhouse, John
 1806 Wooley, Samuel, P.
 1807 Williams, John, (1st.)
 1807 Willis, John
 1807 Willoughby, George
 1807 Warren, George
 1807 Wiggins, John
 1808 Watson, Richard
 1808 Webb, Samuel
 1808 Worrell, Joseph
 1808 Wilson, George
 1808 Watkin, Robert
 1808 Waugh, John
 1808 Waugh, Thomas
 1809 Williams, John, (2d.)
 1809 Waterhouse, John
 1810 Worden, John
 1810 Ward, William
 1810 Ward, Samuel
 1810 Williams, David
 1810 Whitworth, Solomon
 1810 Whitworth, James
 1810 Wilson, Robert
 1810 White, John
 1811 Wood, Robert
 1811 Ward, John, jun.
 1811 Wild, Samuel
 1811 Whatmouth, Abraham
 1811 Waterhouse, William
 1811 Walker, Joseph
 1811 Walker, Thomas
 1812 Whitehouse, Abraham
 1812 Whitehead, Joseph
 1813 Wevill, John
 1814 Walsh, John
 1814 Walton, Daniel
 1814 White, Peter

Y

1779 Yewdall, Zach.
 1798 Yates, Thomas

List of Preachers who have died in Connexion.

An alphabetical List of those Preachers who have died in the Connexion, as far as can be well ascertained with the respective times of their admission and death.

A			C		
1766	ALLEN, John	1810	1748	Catlow, Jonathan	1763
1781	Algar, Joseph	1805	1752	Crabb, William	1764
1786	Atkins, John	1805	1741	Coates, Alexander	1765
1794	Anderson, Joseph	1803	1746	Cownley, Joseph	1792
1794	Ashall, John	1809	1762	Carlill, Thomas	1802
1797	Allum, William Mac	1810	1763	Cattermole, Thomas	1799
1809	Arter, Richard	1809	1764	Coates, Richard	1765
B			1767	Cherry, Thomas	1773
1743	Beard, Thomas	1744	1767	Collins, William	1797
1762	Brammah, William	1780	1764	Costerdine, Robert	1811
1763	Boardman, Richard	1782	1774	Corbett, Thomas	1789
1765	Burke, Richard	1778	1775	Crook, John	1806
1766	Blackwall, Richard	1767	1776	Coke, Thomas	1814
1767	Briscoe, Thomas	1797	1779	Cornock, William Mac	1789
1771	Boon, Charles	1795	1780	Crickett, John	1807
1771	Brettell, John	1796	1780	Coussins, Jonathan	1806
1772	Broadbent, John	1795	1783	Cowmeadow, John	1786
1772	Burney, John Mac	—	1785	Coleman, Andrew	1786
1773	Bradford, Joseph	1808	1789	Cox, William	1810
1774	Barry, James	1783	1794	Cook, John	1795
1775	Beanland, John	1798	D		
1776	Boothby, William	1801	1743	Downes, John	1774
1778	Blair, Andrew	1793	1742	Darney, William	1780
1782	Botts, Samuel	1812	1764	Dempster, James	1775
1783	Burbeck, Edward	1787	1765	Dillon, John	1769
1784	Butterfield, William	1795	1787	Dickinson, Peard	1802
1785	Bland, Charles	1804	1787	Darrah, John	1807
1786	Baldwin, George	1810	1788	Dunn, Thomas	1802
1786	Baxter, John	1806	1790	Denton, William	1796
1786	Bates, Samuel	1803	1794	Dumpleton, Thomas	1807
1786	Baldwin, George	1811	1795	Dutton, John	1800
1787	Burnett, John	1788	1797	Donald, Barth. Mac	1799
1787	Black, John	1790	1801	Debell, Philip	1803
1791	Bishop, Abraham	1793	1806	Denton, James	1809
1792	Balleau, Francis	1802	1810	Dermid, Mac Dermid	1812
1800	Bocock, Joseph	1802	E		
1800	Burkenhead, John	1803	1762	Ellis, John	1772
1805	Biggins, Thomas	1810	1762	Easton, John	1812
1807	Bissix, John	1808	1782	Empringham, R.	1792
1802	Brown, John	1811			

List of Preachers who have died in Connexion.

1788 Elliott, Thomas .	1795	1803 Haigh, Abraham .	1810
1790 Elliot, Richard .	1813	1810 Hargrave, Law. .	1813
1803 Evans, Henry .	1808		
F			
1755 Fenwick, John .	1787	1747 Jane, John .	1750
1765 Furze, John .	1800	1752 Johnson, Thomas .	1797
1780 Foster, Henry .	1787	1754 Jaco, Peter .	1781
1781 Fletcher, John .	1785	1761 Isherwood, Thomas .	1762
1786 Frazer, Francis .	1789	1761 Johnson, John .	1804
1791 Foster, John, sen. .	1809	1777 Jackson, Edward .	1806
1792 Fenwick, William .	1808	1783 Jerom, Joseph .	—
1795 Furnace, John .	1801	1783 Joyce, Matthias .	1814
1798 Finny, Robert .	1811	1796 Jennings, John .	1800
1802 Fisher, John .	1809	1797 Jeune, Francis .	1800
		1799 Jackson, William .	1803
G			
1744 Gilbert, Nicholas .	1763	K	
1746 Greenwood, Paul .	1767	1780 Keighley, Joshua .	1787
1763 Greenwood, Parson .	1811	1784 Kersey, James Mac .	1800
1763 Goodwin, John .	1808	1784 Kyte, Charles .	1803
1768 Garnett, Joseph .	1773	1799 Keys, Thomas .	1801
1776 Gaffney, James .	1779	L	
1785 Gamble, Robert .	1791	1754 Lucas, Richard .	1766
1786 Gore, James .	1790	1757 Lowes, Matthew .	1795
1786 Gordon, David .	1800	1758 Lee, Thomas .	1786
1788 Graham, Daniel .	1794	1763 Levick, Samuel .	1771
1789 Grant, John .	1811	1773 Leach, John .	1810
1793 Green, Robert, .	1800	1776 Lumley, William .	1777
1801 Gamble, William .	1801	1778 Livermore, John .	1783
1804 Green, Edward .	1812	1780 Longley, Thomas .	1809
H			
1743 Holmes, William .	1747	1789 Lomas, Robert .	1810
1747 Hopper, Christopher .	1802	1803 Linnel, Edward .	1808
1755 Hanby, Thomas .	1797	M	
1761 Hanson, Thomas .	1805	1748 Meggett, Samuel .	1764
1766 Harrison, Lancelot .	1807	1761 Morgan, John .	1782
1767 Haime, John .	1784	1776 Mealey, John .	1788
1767 Hunter, William .	1798	1759 Manners, John .	1763
1767 Harper, Joseph .	1811	1749 Maddern, John .	—
1768 Heyward, Robert .	1804	1751 Mitchell, Thomas .	1785
1776 Harrison, John .	1777	1754 Murlin, John .	1799
1776 Hoskins, Thomas .	1778	1757 Mather, Alexander .	1800
1780 Hodgson, Samuel .	1795	1762 Minethorpe, William .	1776
1787 Hewitt, Thomas .	1801	1764 Mason, John .	1810
1791 Hurley, John .	1801	1769 Mott, Thomas .	1773
1794 Harris, Samuel .	1797	1774 Moon, John .	1801
1796 Haslam, Peter .	1808	1774 Mill, Peter .	1806
1798 Hawkshaw, John .	1806	1781 Millar, John .	1796
1799 Hallam, Joseph .	1806	1787 Marshall, Michael .	1794
1800 Hearnshaw, John .	1809	1788 Mullen, James Mac .	1805
1802 Harrison, William .	1809	1792 Martin, William .	1795
		1792 Mahy, William .	1814

List of Preachers who have died in Connexion.

1792	Montgomery, Arch.	1800
1797	Martin, Charles .	1799
1797	Moses, John .	1800
1800	Morrison, Joseph .	1808
1800	Martin, John .	1814
1804	Mill, Thomas .	1806
1812	Massey, Thomas .	1814

N

1747	Nelson, John .	1774
1778	Norris, John .	1782
1778	Naylor, Robert .	1783
1790	Newton, Booth .	1811

O

1758	Oldham, John .	1766
1753	Olivers, Thomas .	1799
1786	Owens, Thomas .	1808

P

1759	Pool, John .	1801
1760	Pennington, William	1767
1762	Pawson, John .	1806
1767	Peacock, John .	1803
1771	Pritchard, John .	1814
1772	Price, John .	—
1772	Payne, Thomas .	1783
1773	Percival, William .	1803
1775	Prickard, John .	1784
1776	Pescod, Joseph .	1805
1781	Peacock, Christopher	1786
1784	Pearce, Benjamin .	1795
1787	Pugh, Hugh .	1788
1794	Parsons, Thomas .	1807
1807	Parkinson, James .	1810
1810	Pontavice, Pierre, du	1810

R

1757	Rodd, William .	1760
1749	Rowell, Jacob .	1784
1759	Roberts, Robert .	1800
1762	Richardson, John	1792
1765	Robertshaw, Jeremiah	1788
1772	Rutherford, Thomas	1806
1774	Rogers, James .	1807
1776	Robinson, Jasper .	1798
1787	Roberts, John .	1788
1791	Robinson, Thomas .	1793
1798	Richardson, James .	1799
1799	Richard, William, A.	1801
1800	Robertson, William	1807
1802	Richardson, Thomas	1804
1805	Robinson, John .	1802

S

1747	Seccombe, Thomas	1758
1744	Slocombe, John .	1777
1742	Swindells, Robert .	1783
1763	Shaw, John .	1793
1766	Standerling, John .	1771
1767	Smith, John .	1773
1708	Seed, Richard .	1805
1770	Swan, Robert .	1811
1770	Swan, Robert .	1810
1772	Snowden, George .	1812
1773	Shorter, George .	1779
1799	Simpson, William .	1804
1786	Seward, Thomas .	1787
1786	Stevens, William .	1814
1787	Sanderson, William	1810
1787	Sandoe, John .	1810
1788	Stephens, John .	1789
1788	Smith, Robert .	1801
1789	Sanderson, John .	1803
1794	Stanton, Thomas .	1808
1796	Sturgeon, William .	1807
1797	Shaw, Thomas .	1801
1799	Shakespeare, Joseph	1800

T

1759	Thompson, William	1799
1760	Tobias, Thomas .	1767
1763	Thomson, Joseph .	1809
1770	Tennant, Thomas .	1793
1785	Thoresby, William	1807
1786	Thoresby, Richard	1786
1789	Thompson, Jonathan	1789
1790	Trethewey, Thomas	1812

V

1775	Valton, John .	1794
1797	Vipond, John .	1799
1797	Vipond, William .	1809
1806	Vipond, David .	1812

W

1750	Walsh, Thomas .	1758
1756	Westell, Thomas .	1794
1764	Wright, Duncan .	1791
1765	Walsh, Richard .	—
1768	Watkins, Christopher	1803
1769	Whatcoat, Richard	1807
1769	Wilkinson, Robert	1781
1769	Wells, Samuel	1780
1769	Whitaker, William	1794
1770	Winby, William .	1772

List of Preachers who have departed from the Work.

1770 Watson, John .	1813	1783 Wilson, William .	1808
1776 Watkinson, Richard	1793	1786 Williams, James .	—
1778 Warwick, Thomas	1810	1788 Willis, Mark .	1795
1778 Warrick, Thomas .	1810	1789 Werrill, Thomas .	1792
1779 Wawne, George .	1781	1797 White, George .	1800
1779 Wadsworth, George	1797	1796 Williams, William .	1812
1781 Wray, James .	1793	1799 Wilson, John .	1813
1782 Wride, Thomas .	1807	1799 Watson, John .	1811

A List of those Preachers who departed from the work, or were expelled; with the respective times, as far as can be ascertained, of their admission and departure.

N. B. As the Conference, in many cases, has omitted to distinguish between those who departed of their own accord, and some few who were at different times expelled, and also, in some cases, to mention at all those who retired, this List contains promiscuously both descriptions.

A				1804 Brownlass, John .	1806
1762 ATLAY, John .	1788			1804 Brocklehurst, Thomas	1807
1770 Avoy, John Mac .	—			1809 Broadbelt, Joseph .	1810
1776 Armstrong, Robert	1788	C			
1778 Accutt, John .	1785	1760 Clough, James .	1774		
1783 Adamson, William	1786	1764 Cheek, Moseley, .	1769		
B				1767 Cotty, James .	1780
1747 Bennett, John .	1752	1767 Colly Benjamin .	—		
1762 Bumstead, Daniel .	1775	1768 Crowle, Jonathan .	1776		
1765 Brownfield, James .	1770	1772 Christian, John .	1777		
1766 Barker, William .	1780	1777 Church, William .	1790		
1767 Buckingham, William	1770	1779 Christie, James .	1799		
1768 Bell, Robert .	1769	1787 Collins, William, jun.	—		
1769 Barnes, Thomas .	1770	1789 Cross, Joseph .	1800		
1771 Bristol, John .	1777	1791 Cummins, Alexander	1798		
1778 Bent, James .	—	1793 Clarke, John .	1799		
1778 Blake, Robert .	1784	1795 Cooke, Joseph .	1806		
1780 Bridge, Robert .	1790	1806 Constable, William	1810		
1783 Bond, Charles .	1793	D			
1785 Blackbourne, William	1809	— Davis, John .	1768		
1786 Broadbent, Thomas	1799	1753 Davis, Mark .	1769		
1787 Barrowclough, David	1806	1766 Dancer, Thomas .	1767		
1789 Brandon, William .	1791	1766 Deaves, James .	1768		
1790 Boyle, John .	1802	1768 Duncan, John .	1772		
1792 Brown, William .	1795	1772 Davis, Robert .	1783		
1792 Brice John .	1800	1773 Dufton, William .	1792		
1800 Bagnall, John .	1803	1774 Delap, Andrew .	1779		

List of Preachers who have departed from the Work.

1775 Dean, Peter .	1778	1771 Hindmarsh, James .	1783
1776 Davis, Robert .	—	1773 Hunt, Richard .	1774
1780 Dice, George .	1786	1776 Hall, James .	1798
1788 Drew, Richard .	1792	1776 Hampson, John, sen.	1785
1788 Dobson, Thomas .	—	1777 Hampson, John, jun.	1785
1789 Dieuade, William .	1797	1777 Howe, John .	1789
1798 Davis, Thomas .	1808	1782 Hoskins, William .	1789
E		1783 Hetherington, William	1791
1747 Edwards, John .	1753	1784 Hindmarsh, William	—
1771 Eden, Thomas .	1772	1786 Harper, John .	1799
1772 Eels, William .	1788	1786 Heath, William .	1808
1781 Ellis, Thomas .	1787	1787 Holmes, John .	1789
1783 Edwards, Samuel .	1788	1799 Heywood, John .	1803
1792 Eversfield, Stephen	1797	1804 Hurd, Thomas .	1806
F		1807 Hodgson, Charles .	1810
1766 Fugill, William .	1768	1807 Hewgill, Joseph .	1810
1770 Floyd, John .	1782	1809 Harwood, John .	1810
1771 Fenwick, Michael .	1784	I	
1775 Ferguson, Peter .	1776	1746 Jones, John .	1767
1770 Fothergill, Joseph .	1776	1744 Jones, Joseph .	1760
1790 Franklin, William .	1797	1743 Jones, James .	1749
1806 Fussell, James .	1809	1767 James, Thomas .	1770
G		1780 Inglis, Andrew .	1793
1768 Garnett, Joseph .	—	1781 Ingham, John .	1786
1757 Glazebrook, James	1774	1781 Jordan, James .	1788
1760 Gibbs, John .	1774	1794 Jones, John .	1799
1774 Guthrie, George .	1778	1798 Joll, Diggory .	1801
1780 Green, William .	1796	K	
1782 Glascock, John .	1783	1752 Kershaw, James .	1757
1786 Gillis, John .	1798	1774 Kershaw, Arthur .	1775
1786 Geary, John Mac .	1793	1786 Kelshall, Stephen .	1787
1790 Greaves, Thomas .	1792	1785 Kilham, Alexander	1796
1790 Graham, John .	1798	1792 Kyte, Joseph .	1796
1798 Gesburn, John .	1803	L	
1798 Gilead, John .	1806	1743 Larwood, Samuel .	1753
1803 Gunn, Robert .	1808	1772 Linnel, William .	1773
H		1765 Longbottom, James	—
1738 Humphreys, Joseph	1741	1779 Lindsay, Robert .	1788
1741 Haughton, John .	1760	1788 Lyons, James, .	1796
1742 Hardwick, Thomas	1749	1788 Lee, Nebuchadnezzar	1791
1761 Heslop, John .	1768	1790 Lawton, James .	1797
1764 Helton, John .	1777	1800 Lockwood, William	1803
1758 Hosmer, John .	1770	1804 Lozenby, George .	1812
1764 Henderson, Richard	1771	1806 Lowry, James .	1813
1766 Halliday, Thomas .	1786	1810 Livingston, Thomas	1813
1767 Harry, William .	1770	M	
1768 Howard, Robert .	1770	1740 Maxfield, Thomas	1762
1769 Hudson, James .	1777	1742 Meyrick, Thomas .	1750
1761 Hudson, George .	1780	1750 Morgan, James .	—
1769 Hern, Jonathan	1791	1746 Moss, Richard .	1752

List of Preachers who have departed from the Work.

1753	Murray, John	1774
1759	Manners, Nicholas	1775
1767	Magor, John	1770
1771	Moulson, John	—
1773	Moore, Joseph	1779
1773	Mather, Ralph	—
1773	Moorhouse, Michael	1786
1774	Moore, William	1785
1776	Morley, John	1797
1777	Moore, Hugh	1790
1779	Mitchell, Samuel	1799
1786	Moseley, Abraham	1805
1786	Moorhead, Samuel	—
1787	Melcombson, John	—
1798	Moore, John	1801
1800	Mitchell, Page	1803

N

1766	Nabb, Alexander Mac	1780
1761	Newall, Thomas	1780

O

1746	Oddie, James	1771
1765	Orpe, William	1768
1760	Oliver, John	1784

P

1767	Peacock, John	1769
1764	Price, Peter	1768
1765	Pilmoor, Joseph	1774
1768	Proctor, Stephen	1782
1769	Pitt, William	1772
1770	Perfect, James	1785
1771	Price, Nehemiah	1790
1787	Phillips, George	1789
1802	Poulter, Thomas	1804

R

1768	Roe, George	1760
1742	Reeves, Jonathan	1760
1750	Roberts, William	1760
1740	Richards, Thomas	1759
1765	Rourke, Thomas	1770
1780	Readshaw, Thomas	1783
1762	Rankin, Thomas	1787
1765	Rea, James	1770
1767	Ryan, Thomas	1791
1768	Rodda, Martin	1781
1776	Robbins, Henry	1784
1783	Renwick, James	—
1785	Ramshaw, John	1795
1785	Robotham, John	—
1799	Radcliffe, James	1804
—	Roberts, Thomas, jun.	1804

S

1749	Skelton, Charles	1753
1764	Stephens, James	1767
1767	Smith, Samuel	1779
1768	Sanderson, Hugh	1777
1772	Severn, William	1778
1774	Smith, Francis	1775
1775	Saunderson, Joseph	1784
1776	Skinner, James	1782
1780	Shaw, Thomas	—
1786	Smith, Thomas	1788
1770	Slater, Edward	1776
1782	Scott, Robert	1790
1802	Story, John	1804
1796	Shrowder, Hans	1802

T

1764	Thomas, Barnabas	1772
1743	Trembath, John	1760
1771	Tatton, Thomas	1778
1774	Tunney, William	1781
1774	Thom, William	1797
1783	Thom, James	1810
—	Thoresby, Francis	1795
1786	Tregortha, John	—
1788	Taylor, Henry	1797
1794	Thompson, Richard	1802
1807	Toland, John	1812

U

1785	Vernor, Thomas	1794
1770	Undrell, John	1777

W

1744	Walker, Francis	1753
1747	Williams, Thomas	—
1742	Wheatley, James	1754
1745	Webster, Eliazer	1751
1745	Williamson, Richard	1751
1764	Whitehead, John	1769
1765	Woodcock, Samuel	1776
1763	Whitwell, William	1769
1768	Wolfe, Francis	1782
—	Watson, John, sen.	1773
1770	Wright, Richard	1777
1770	Williams, Robert	—
1774	Whitely, John	1779
1778	Ward, Nathaniel	1785
1779	Walker, John	1782
1785	Walker, Peter	1788
1787	West, John	1790
1788	Winscombe, Jasper	1792
1788	Wymment, Thomas	1791

CHAPTER V.

METHODISM DEFENDED.

*Being an Answer to some Objections to the Methodists ;
and containing Remarks on TOLERATION, and a Vin-
dication of the Principle of universal and equal Li-
berty in Matters of Religion.*

AND now, candid reader, after perusing the foregoing account of the history, the doctrines, and the discipline of the Methodists, what do you think is there to excite either disgust, or blame? "Well," you may say, "at any rate, many people say a great deal against them." And was there ever a pious people on earth, of whom the world did not say a great deal of evil? The propensity in a man to slander virtue, is a awful proof of the fall and depravity of human nature. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and therefore against the things, and the people of God. Men would be shocked at the sight of themselves, and one another, were they to avow themselves the enemies of God. It would be rather too gross for men to declare their hatred of that holiness, which is according to the image and commands of God. And it is but seldom, that we meet with a person who has impious courage enough to enter his protest against the word of God. The whole strength, therefore of this malignity of heart, is reserved for the people of God. Against them, the carnal mind displays itself in reviling, evil-speaking, and persecuting. But it ought to be observed, that the ungodly never reproach and persecute the children of God as such; they do it under some

other pretence. They charge them with crimes, follies, and absurdities, which they are not guilty of, and then clamour against them as evil-doers. If they did this to the green tree, surely they will do it much more to the dry.

The enemies of Jesus Christ laid to his charge things that he knew not; then seized him as an enemy to God and man, and under this pretence, condemned him, led him to Calvary, and crucified him there. One party cried out, "He is an enemy to Moses," in other words, to their established church, of which Moses was the founder. Another party exclaimed, "He is an enemy to Cæsar," that is, the government, of which Cæsar, or the Roman emperor, was the head: Canaan being then reduced to a Roman province.

And in reading the Acts of the Apostles, we may constantly observe, that the bitter persecutions raised against the first Christians, and the first Christian preachers especially, were uniformly under false accusations. They were charged with being enemies to the established religion, in Judea, in Ephesus, and various other places where they preached the gospel. These messengers of the true and living God, were termed "pestilent fellows, sowers of sedition," disturbers of the public tranquillity, and disseminating new and dangerous doctrines.

Some of the calumniators of the Methodists, I do not doubt, do it ignorantly, like Saul of Tarsus; and probably like him, think they are doing God service. For the sake of these, as well as many others, I shall proceed to answer a few objections which have been made to this denomination of Christians.

In the former periods of Methodism, the outcry was, that so much praying, hearing of sermons, &c. promoted idleness; and this, together with what they contributed in support of religion, would ruin those who followed it.

Objection to Methodism, as unnecessary, answered.

But matter of fact has so constantly proved this charge to be false, that little is said upon this head at present; though it is still repeated in some places where Methodism is but little known.

1. Some object to Methodism "as unnecessary, seeing we have a very good Protestant church, in which is sound doctrine, as the articles, homilies, and liturgy, testify; and also, that in this church, there is a large body of clergy, 18,000 or more, who are very learned men, and were regularly appointed to the office."

To this I answer, we *have* a church, and for a *national* one, I believe it to be one of the very best in the world. And I believe the doctrines contained in the articles, homilies, and liturgy, as firmly as any church-man whatsoever; much more firmly than many of the clergy do. In my younger days, for some years, I attended the service of the church as constantly as any person in England. And to this day, when I have opportunity, it gives me pleasure, to attend the service of the church. And that pleasure is much heightened, when I find the pulpit and the reading-desk harmonize in doctrine. But alas! I have too frequently found, that while the reading-desk still "held fast the form of sound words," the pulpit had "erred and strayed like a lost sheep." Had it not been for this apostasy of the pulpit, it is probable, Methodism had never existed in its present form. For what was its origin? Why, a few young men, educated for the ministry in the Church of England, became truly pious, and very zealous. They proclaimed aloud the almost-forgotten doctrines of the Church of England. But these doctrines were not only out of fashion, but were greatly offensive to the main body of the clergy. They shut the doors of the churches against these pious, zealous, and orthodox clergymen. The consequence was, they must either retreat to other places of worship,

Causes of the Church departing from her original doctrines.

preach in the open air, or give up preaching altogether. But, believing that a dispensation of the gospel was committed to them, and that woeful consequences would follow their departure from their heavenly calling, they preached where Providence opened the way for them.

But, what could occasion, in the Church of England, this departure from her original doctrines, and this aversion to their being preached? Every effect has a cause. What are the *chief causes* of this? I believe the *first cause* to be, a most capital error in the appointments to the ministerial office. It seems to have been forgotten, that no man can be a proper *Christian minister*, without first becoming a *Christian*. Learning, and other qualifications may be good in their place, but nothing can supply the want of piety. It is true, the clergy are *all* Christians in name: I hope *many* of them are not only *almost*, but *altogether* Christians. But is this *universally* or even *generally* the case? There are many, whose morals may be very decent, but who yet seem to have no sense of religion upon their minds. They carry about them no savour of piety; and are no way fitted to watch over souls as they who must give an account. If they *do duty*, as it is called, it is as much as can be looked for.

Secondly, the way by which clergyman, very frequently become possessed of benefices or livings, operates strongly to the injury of the church. They are neither chosen by the people, to whom they minister in holy things, nor by their ministerial brethren. But rather, they are presented to the living, either by a *single* clergyman, (the bishop) or a *single* layman, (the patron) the Lord Chancellor, or the Prime minister of State. If some of the livings are bestowed by the Universities, still it is in such a way as does not materially mend the matter.

Preachers not regularly appointed, an objection.

In presenting a clergyman to a benefice, sometimes, no doubt, it is done, as it ought to be, on account of his piety, talents, and suitableness for the situation. But, will any person, who is sufficiently acquainted with these things, say that this is *generally* the case?

Thirdly, the discipline of the Church is so notoriously and deplorably defective, as to countenance or connive at evils innumerable. Many are the instances of immorality, and neglect of duty, among the clergy; and yet, how seldom, are any of them brought to a serious account for their conduct? What a rare thing for any of these to get serious reproof from their superiors, and still more rare for one of them to be deposed from his office!

What I mean to say, is, that *these* are, in my judgment, the principal causes of the Church being in its present state, and it was the existence of these evils which rendered Methodism necessary.

2. Others object to Methodism, "That the preachers are not regularly *appointed* to the work of the ministry; nor yet possess sufficient *qualifications* for the work." I answer, (1.) With regard to their *appointment* to the work, it is, I think, more *scriptural* than that of the established clergy. Read the statement I have given, in the chapter on Discipline, of the appointment of local and travelling preachers. Of one thing we may be absolutely certain, that God never called a wicked man to the work of the ministry. "To the wicked, saith God, what hast thou to do to take my law into thy mouth; whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hath cast my words behind thee?" The ministers of Christ are termed ambassadors, 2 Cor. v. 20. But did ever any sovereign in the world, employ a person in an embassy, whom he knew hated him, and was much more attached to the cause and interests of those to whom he was sent, than

Methodist Preachers have the essential parts of ordination,

to those of his master? Whoever has a *regular* call to the ministry, it is not a sinful or unregenerated man.

As to *ordination* itself, the Methodist preachers have at least all the *essential* parts. They undergo an examination, both as to their characters and qualifications for the ministry, far more suited to the nature of the office, than those pass through who are most loud in urging this objection. Had *they* to pass through such a process before they could obtain deacon's orders, as a preacher among the Methodists has, prior to his admission on trial, some of them would never be ordained deacons. And had they after that, to wait four years before they could obtain priest's orders, and then go through such an examination as our preachers do before they are admitted into full connexion, many a deacon would never be made a priest. Our ordination, (as the admissions above-mentioned may be very properly termed,) is not deficient in any point, except in that of laying on of hands: and though this was practised by the apostles, yet it is not declared to be necessary, nor is it enjoined for general observance. Nay, it will admit of dispute, whether the ceremony of laying on of hands, was any way particularly connected with ordination to the ministry. It was sometimes used upon such occasions by the apostles. But it is not *certain* it was *always* used when men were set apart for that sacred office; while it is very certain, they laid hands upon other persons without any such appointment. This was done when the seven were appointed "to serve tables," and to look after the "widows" and other needy persons "in the daily ministrations," Acts vi. 1—6. Peter and John laid their hands on these people of Samaria, whom they baptized, after they "had received the word of God," Acts viii. 7. Ananias "put his hands upon Saul," but it is expressly said, that he did this that he might

though not the ceremony of laying on of hands.

receive his sight, Acts ix. 12, 17. Hands were laid upon Saul and Barnabas, at Antioch; but this was not so much an appointment to the ministry, as a *setting apart* for a particular mission. They had been preachers a good while, and had taught "much people," for "a whole year" at Antioch, Acts xi. 26.—xii. 1—4. Paul laid his hands upon certain disciples at Ephesus, whom he baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus," and who had before been baptized "with John's baptism," Acts xix. 1—7. Paul "laid his hands on" Publius, the chief man of the island of Melita, or Malta, and "prayed with him," and "healed him." These instances suffice to shew what is meant by "the doctrine of laying on of hands," Heb. vi. 2. But whatever may be said about the *absolute necessity* of the laying on of hands, at appointments to the gospel ministry, I feel no inclination to dispute the *propriety* of it. A number of us have received this from men whom *we* think as much authorized to confer ordination as any bishop in Christendom. And should the Conference so determine, it may easily be imparted to all the preachers now in our connexion, and all succeeding ones upon their being *received into full connexion*. It will be found a much easier task to put hands *upon* a man's head, than to put mental qualifications *into* it. And it is to be feared, that "mitred heads" sometimes lay "hands on skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn." Nor is this defect confined to Episcopalians, as the following anecdote seems to intimate. At a certain ordination in Scotland, when the time came for putting hands upon the candidate's head, one minister was observed to keep his distance, and stretching out his hand, laid the end of his stick upon the young minister's head. Being afterwards spoken to upon this strange act, he pleasantly observed,

The qualifications of a Methodist Preacher.

“ He thought timber to timber formed a very proper union.”

I shall only add, that I am satisfied, there are many clergymen belonging to the Church, of good natural parts, of useful; as well as ornamental learning; and a goodly and increasing number, who have both the form and the power of godliness. And exceedingly glad should I be, were I able to say this respecting the whole of them.

As to *qualifications*, (2.) The Methodists require, that a man should be able to pray and preach, and that without a book. Whereas, had they nothing to do but to pray by a form, which was made long before they were born, and to read sermons, made perhaps by others, no qualification would have been necessary, but the bare ability to read. While these gentry are talking about “ *unqualified* and *insufficient* teachers,” survey the comparative difference between the men thus slandered, and vast numbers of their own order. Take both of them to a pulpit. These “ *unqualified* and *insufficient* teachers,” can pray and preach, and that in a way which reaches both to the understandings and affections of the congregation. Meantime, this gentleman, who talks about his being regularly bred to the ministry, and who thinks himself duly *qualified* and amply *sufficient* for the work, how does he acquit himself? Why, he convinces us that he has learnt to read, and this is all we can fairly gather from his performance. But take his crutches from him, and let him pray and preach without book. We will not require him to do this in his boasted Latin and Greek; these, he may say, and perhaps very truly, that he has in a great measure forgotten. But let him speak in good sterling English, for an hour, in such a way as to give satisfaction to the major part of a com-

His want of a classical education, an objection.

mon congregation.—But alas! he is utterly at a loss! He *does* nothing, and *can* do nothing, but put us in mind of Isa. lvi. 10. “They are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark.”

Again, a sick man wants somebody to pray with him. The clergyman is sent for. After a little conversation, perhaps not much calculated to edify, he pulls out a book, and reads a short prayer by the bed-side of the dying person. This being finished, he perhaps tells the afflicted person he hopes he will soon be better, and bids him farewell. And in this manner does he give his parishioners “*ghostly counsel*,” and assist and comfort them when they lie on the bed of affliction. In such cases, it frequently happens, that a Methodist preacher is afterwards sent for, and his labours are found to be more suitable and profitable. But the objector urges,

3. That “these preachers have not had a regular classical education.” I answer, *education* is a very good thing, and a *classical* education is not held in contempt by the Methodists. But it is not a thing indispensably necessary to a proper and useful discharge of the work of the ministry. Such an education may be convenient and useful, and, at any rate, ornamental. But, a man of only a common education, may learn and teach all that is necessary to salvation; the knowledge of every essential doctrine of the gospel, and every branch of religion, whether speculative, experimental, or practical. What knowledge is necessary on the subject of religion, which cannot be found in English authors? Nay, what knowledge have nineteen out of twenty, yea, ninety-nine out of a hundred, of these very clergymen, in matters of religion, but what might have been obtained, and even in greater perfection, from authors whose works are published in the English language? is *shadow* to supersede;

and triumph over *substance*? Besides, there are some Methodist preachers who would sustain no injury to their reputation, by a comparison with many clergymen in point of learning.

Did the preaching of the gospel consist chiefly of learned criticisms, the advantage of a classical education would be greater than it is: more especially, if the whole, or a considerable part of the people, were classical scholars also. And except this be the case, how preposterous it is, to hear a preacher quoting scraps of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in his sermons, which, perhaps, not two persons in the congregation understand! And should he not understand some of these scraps himself, it will not make the least difference in such cases. The edification of the people will be just the same, and his fame, as a linguist, will not be at all tarnished, at least, when not a single linguist is present. All therefore, who are ambitious of this tinsel, must garnish their discourses with scraps of the learned languages, particularly among country farmers, mechanics, and village peasants.

Waving the *languages* in which the classics were written, what remarkable advantages may be obtained from the *matter* contained in them? Is that such as is particularly calculated to promote a spirit of Christian piety? Has it some very powerful tendency to stimulate to an imitation of Jesus Christ, in temper and conduct? Does it specially teach a man how to instruct others in genuine godliness and true Christianity? Would not the classical authors, most proper to be put in the hands of men about to become ministers of Jesus Christ, be the Bible, the Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers, a well written History of the Church of Christ, since the death of the apostles, especially a History of the Waldenses, and Albigenses; Fox's Book of Martyrs; the History of the

in preference to heathen authors.

Popes, and the Pontificate; Burnet's History of the Reformation; the Sufferings of the Protestants in France, especially in the reign of Louis the 14th; Neale's History of the Puritans; and the Histories of the Church of Scotland, in the reigns of Charles the 2nd, and James 2nd. To these I would add, as Christian classics, the works of Archbishops Leighton, Tillotson, and Secker; bishops Newton, Horne, and Porteus; of Mr. Baxter, and various others of the puritanical and nonconformist writers, especially those of Dr. Watts, and Dr. Doddridge, as well as the writings of Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Wesley, and Mr. Fletcher. Many others might be mentioned, especially Shuckford's and Prideaux's Connexions. A few good Commentaries on the Old and New Testaments, should be a distinguished part of the ministerial classics, as well as a History, a Dictionary, and a Geography of the Bible. And also the Lives of Eminent Christians, more particularly the Lives of Eminent Ministers of Christ.

A diligent perusal of these books, would be much more likely to prepare a man for the Christian ministry, than reading what are commonly termed *the Classics*. A surprising circumstance, indeed, that a man should be thought not sufficiently instructed to preach the glorious gospel of peace, without being sent to the polluted heathenish schools of Greece and Rome, and by some of these classical authors, to have his judgment perverted, and the bias of his soul directed to, and inflamed with a thirst after the desire of the eye, the desire of the flesh, and the pride of life; to be brought to admire, and almost adore, what is earthly, sensual, and devilish; to have his imagination fired, almost beyond all bounds, with ideas of lust and debauchery; war and slaughter; robbery and evastation! Would it not have been a much better preparation for declaring the truth as it is

in Jesus, and the whole counsel of God, to have been able to say, he had diligently studied the whole Bible, and especially the New Testament, and that both for his own direction and to qualify him to instruct others, and that he had accompanied this reading with much prayer; above all, that he truly feared and loved God, saw and felt the value of immortal souls, the evil of sin, the necessity of holiness, the fallen state of human nature, the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, and the solemn and infinite importance of eternal things?

But it is objected, "Many of these preachers are mechanics, and were brought up to occupations of the more laborious and less respectable classes." And is there any thing criminal, or degrading in this? Elisha followed the *laborious* employment of ploughing, until the very hour he was called to the prophetic office. The apostle Paul was brought up to the trade of tent-making, and wrought at it after he was employed in preaching the gospel. The bishops of Ephesus are exhorted to labour with their hands, and support the weak. Acts xx. Let reason and common sense decide, whether being employed in an honest and useful mechanical calling, can unfit a man for becoming a preacher of the gospel, more than idleness, shooting and hunting, card-playing and dancing. The argument is much on the side of the mechanic. And it is worthy of observation, that among all those whom our Saviour called to the apostolic office, there was not one genteel sluggard; not one airy, polite, and fashionable buck or beau. But they were all men, who, as to bodily labour, had *borne the yoke in their youth*. It would have been well, if many of the clergy had been brought up to some trade. They might have exercised themselves occasionally, had it been only for amusement, and they would have found it better for their health and reputation, than riding after dogs, hares,

in those who preach the gospel.

and foxes, or attending the races, &c. They might have known the better how to find fault with such mechanics as they have occasion to employ; and if any of them should be silenced for misconduct, they might have earned a little honest bread, instead of enlisting for soldiers, or becoming a burden to their friends.

Many persons have been startled at the bare idea of a man attempting to preach who had not been *regularly educated* for the purpose. But does the New Testament, or any part of the Bible, lay any stress upon such education, or even so much as mention it? There is nothing in the *word* of God, or in the *actions* of God, that sanctions this notion. None of the apostles chosen by our Lord were classical scholars. And though Paul was afterwards made an apostle, it does not appear to have been *because* he was a man of academical learning, but a sincere and zealous Christian. And hence, he held his classical learning, comparatively, in contempt. Alluding to this, he says, he became a fool for Christ, counted it but dung and dross, when contrasted with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and resolved, henceforth, to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

As to the prophets, few of them were men of literature, according to the sense commonly affixed to the term? I apprehend, had they been such, it would not have *prevented* their appointment to the office: but their being called to the office *without* this qualification, proves that it was not absolutely *necessary*, and also how little value God attaches to it. But, perhaps it will be said, that we read of "The sons of the prophets," who are supposed to have been students in divinity, 2 Kings, chap. ii. and chap. v. But what they really were, is very uncertain. One thing is certain, than an establishment of any seminary, called "*The Schools of the Prophets*,"

Comparison between the priests under the law,

or any thing of the kind, did not form any branch of the institutions of Moses. And it is equally certain, that Jesus Christ neither established, nor ever mentioned any thing bearing a resemblance to such establishment.

What do we read of these "sons of the prophets," who came forth to meet Elisha, that is interesting? What they said to him was so useless, that he would not listen to them, but said, "*Hold ye your peace.*" And as he would not let them *speak*, so neither would he let them *act*. They foolishly proposed to send fifty men to search for Elijah, who was gone to heaven, on the tops of mountains, and in vallies; but he rebuked their folly. If these "sons of the prophets" had been of any great value, and had possessed special qualifications for the prophetic office, one might have supposed one of them would have been chosen to succeed Elijah, instead of such a blow being given to academical pride, by the calling of the new prophet from the ploughtail, while these youths were deemed so "unqualified and insufficient," that they were not allowed either to speak or act.

We have no account, that the priests under the law had any thing that could be called a classical education. We have no information that David had ever undergone, such a literary drilling at any college; nor yet Solomon, the very wisest of men. Yet which of our collegians can write so as to bear comparison with them? And there is neither proof nor probability that any of the prophets, or David, or Solomon, were linguists, And if it be said our Saviour made his apostles linguists, I answer, the reason is plain, they were to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," in all nations. And as many different languages were spoke in the different countries, and the people of each region understood only their own language, it was abso-

and the priests of the present day.

lutely necessary, that they who were to preach to *every* creature in *all* the different nations, should be able to speak in the language of each. And if those clergymen who talk so much about languages, would stir up their zeal, and go as missionaries to the East Indies, China, Japan, Africa, Turkey, or any part of the Continent of Europe, it is admitted it would be necessary for them to understand and speak the languages of the people to whom they preach. And if it be said, the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek is necessary to the right understanding of the scriptures, (the languages in which the sacred volume was written,) I reply, it is paying but a poor compliment to the English translators of the Bible, as well as to all our commentators and scripture critics to suppose that a man cannot sufficiently understand the Bible, both for his own direction and the instruction of others. If all these put together are not sufficient to convey to my mind proper and sufficient ideas of the doctrines, and other matters contained in holy writ, what hope can I indulge that I should be able, (should God spare me to the age of Methuselah, and I spend all my days in studying Greek and Hebrew,) sufficiently to understand the Bible, either for the instruction of others, or my own direction. Perhaps it will be deemed wandering from the point, when I say, that neither Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nor Joseph, though such very eminent men, could either read or write. For there is neither proof nor probability, that letters were in use till the time of Moses. Could Joseph have written, we may rest assured, he would have sent a letter, by the hand of his brethren, to his aged and much-loved father, to have invited him to come down into Egypt. But nothing of the sort is mentioned or implied.

But, am I then arguing against learning? No! I allow its proper worth; but I am arguing against what I might

call, *the POPERY of learning*. For learning, or a pretence to learning, or a little of both, is now made to answer the ends, which the supremacy and infallibility of the pope, sham miracles, &c. were made to answer in former days. In many instances, it is mere dust thrown in the eyes of the people. Learning in itself, is not an evil. But when, under pretence of it, a sort of literary popery is attempted to be established, and men in square caps and other antiquated habiliments, would seize the imaginary keys of the pretended successor of St. Peter, common sense, and indignation against imposition, in whatever shape it may come, impel me to enter my protest.

Whatever may be wanting in *our* literary endowments, is amply compensated in *laborious usefulness*. In this, at least, the Methodist preachers are not a whit behind the very chief of our modern apostles. Every Methodist preacher, upon an average, goes through nearly three times as much *labour* as the *generality* of other ministers, whether of the establishment, or among the different denominations of dissenters. There are a few exceptions, but not many. Some of the clergy are not only pious and exemplary in their moral conduct, but also patterns of diligence, and laborious zeal, which their brethren would do well to imitate. And as to *usefulness*, how many of our *regular* and *learned* gentlemen will stand the comparison with our preachers? I would ask, whether more careless sinners have not been reformed, during the last seventy years, by the labours of Methodist preachers, who, in a *national* point of view, have cost nothing, than by all the labours of more than *eighteen thousand* clergymen, who have cost the nation so many millions of money? This was the opinion of the celebrated Dr. Priestley, who was far from being a Methodist, though a minute observer of *moral* as well as *natural*

The doctrines of the Methodists consistent with those of the Church.

causes and effects. It is allowed, that extensive good has been done, but this would have given some greater satisfaction had it been done in the Church. I can only say, if God had wrought *in* and *by* the Church, the Methodists would have been no hindrance, but would have rejoiced, and assisted with all their might. Whenever any clergyman has shewn a disposition to do good, in his day, the Methodists have been the first to rejoice at the sight, and to give him every encouragement and assistance in their power. And in this, they have often overlooked difference of opinion, and even sometimes an unfriendly disposition on the part of such clergyman. It may be asked with surprise, what causes this antipathy to the Methodists, which we so frequently witness in clergymen, and even in some, who, on account of their piety and zeal, and their preaching agreeably to the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, are themselves called Methodists? This question deserves a serious answer. The fact is notorious: but what can be the cause? The Methodist preachers do not get any share of the church-livings, nor cause any deductions from the salaries of the clergy; nor have they any intention, desire, or expectation, of ever obtaining any part of these emoluments.

It has never been an object of Methodism, to oppose the clergy of the established Church. The Methodist preachers inculcate the doctrines of the Church, and frequently use the liturgy in their own chapels. And it would please them much to see the Church in prosperity. For this they have long hoped and prayed. But the conduct of some of the clergy, makes them almost despair of ever seeing this desire of their hearts accomplished. Nothing sinks their hopes, and excites their fears, like the following lamentable and undeniable circumstance. Many of the clergy, are far more zealous against

Anecdote of a Vicar and one of his parishioners.

Methodism than they are against sin. A man may live in rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, or other heinous sins, and perhaps neither in private nor in public, does his parson say any thing to warn him of his danger, or to turn him from the evil of his ways. Here would be a fair occasion, not only to press home the grand concerns of the soul and of eternity, but to represent to the sinner, *The danger of the Church*, when its members act so contrary to the gospel of Christ. In some remarkable cases, a few neighbouring clergymen might go in a body to a notorious sinner, to admonish, instruct, and pray with him. But, how seldom is this done? At the same time, if a man become thoughtful, read pious books, frequent the Methodist chapel, and begin to pray, there is a great display of zeal to turn him from this new path.*

Of all the adults in England, how few go to any place of worship? Suppose one in three attend public worship, two-thirds spend the sabbath in idleness, visiting, working, in journeys of pleasure, and some in committing more sin on that day, than on all the other days in the week. Now, here is a noble field for the exertion of clerical zeal and talents? Let them "return from following their brethren," 2 Sam. ii. 26. who are gone to the Methodists and Dissenters, and let them go after those who remain in ignorance, carelessness, and sin, bring

* The Vicar of P—— taking a walk one Sunday evening, not far from the Methodist chapel, perceived Mr. —— at a distance, and suspected he had been there. He accosted him with some warmth, "What Mr. —— have you been to encourage these vagabond preachers? I thought a man of your understanding had known better; I am surprised at you." Mr. —— endeavouring to steady himself, for he was drunk, replied, "I have only been drinking a quart or two of ale at the Bunch of Grapes, with neighbour D. Sir." "O, I beg your pardon, I thought you had been at the Methodist chapel, good night, good night."

The Methodists are a loyal people.

them to their churches, and warn them, teach them, and lead them to Christ, to holiness, and heaven. The Methodists will not oppose them, but greatly rejoice to see so much good done, whatever may have been the first stimulus to such laudable and useful labour. By such conduct as this, they may keep a large majority of the people in their interest. And, believe me, there is work enough for all the clergy, the Dissenting ministers, and all the Methodist preachers in England.

Should the objector say, "Every departure from the church, will increase a party, which either is, or may be, disaffected to the state," I answer, the Methodists have proved themselves as good and loyal subjects as any in the king's dominions. There has never been one person, belonging to the Wesleyan Methodists, executed for high treason, transported, or otherwise punished for sedition; or tried, or imprisoned, under any such charge. And whenever there has been a fair occasion for displaying it, their attachment to the government, has been conspicuous. This was the case in Ireland, during the late rebellion; in the West India islands, when threatened by the French, some few years ago: to which I may add, the untarnished and distinguished reputation those Methodists have maintained who have been in the army and the navy.

At the battle of Fontenoy, John Haime, and a few other Methodists, greatly distinguished themselves by their courage and conduct. John Haime, after his discharge from the army, became a travelling preacher, and died the death of the righteous, at Whitchurch, in Hampshire, August 18, 1784, in the 78th year of his age. In the account of his life, written by himself, he says, "On May 1, 1745, we had a full trial of our faith at Fontenoy. This day God was pleased to prove our little flock, and to shew them his power. They shewed such courage

and boldness in the fight, as made the officers as well as soldiers amazed. When William Clements had his arm broken by a musket-ball, they would have carried him out of the battle. But he said, 'No: I have an arm left to hold my sword: I will not go yet.' When another shot broke his other arm, he said, 'I am as happy as I can be out of paradise.' John Evans having both his legs taken off by a cannon-ball, was laid across a cannon to die: where, as long as he could speak, he was praising God with joyful lips."

"For my own part, I stood the hottest fire of the enemy for seven hours. But I told my comrades, 'the French have no ball made, that will kill me this day.' After about seven hours, a cannon-ball killed my horse under me. An officer cried out aloud, 'Haime, where is your God now?' I answered, 'Sir, he is here with me; and he will bring me out of this battle.' Presently a cannon-ball took off his head. I was exposed both to the enemy and to our own horse; but that did not discourage me at all: for I knew the God of Jacob was with me. I had a long way to go through all our horse, the balls flying on every side. The hotter the battle grew, the more strength was given me."

William Clements wrote to Mr. Wesley, saying, "We lay on our arms all night. In the morning the cannon began at half past four o'clock; and the Lord took away all fear from me, so that I went into the field with joy. The balls flew on either hand, and men fell in abundance; but nothing touched me till about two o'clock. Then I received a ball through my left arm, and rejoiced so much the more. Soon after I received another in my right, which obliged me to quit the field. But I scarce knew, whether I was on earth or in heaven. It was one of the sweetest days I ever enjoyed."

The grand effectual check that was given to the late

Oppression and persecution impolitic.

dreadful rebellion in Ireland, was very much owing to Mr. Michael M'Cornock, a Methodist. He had formerly been in the army, and still possessed both the courage and skill of a good soldier.

There was a small company of Methodists on board the *Victory*, Lord Nelson's ship, at the battle of Trafalgar. An officer, who particularly watched them, declared they were the best sailors in the ship; and expressed his astonishment, that not one of them was either killed or wounded.

Finally, did ever a single Methodist desert from either the army or navy? I believe not. Deserters are almost always Churchmen. And if any thing could possibly cause any deviation, or abatement, in this respect, among the Methodists, it would be oppression and persecution: it would be precisely what these *alarmists* about *the danger of the church*, are labouring to bring on. No *pious* people ever became inimical to the government under which they lived, but through cruel treatment. It has only been when *their lives have been made bitter by reason of cruel bondage*, or unmerited affliction, like Israel in Egypt, that they have ever been brought to breathe the spirit of the posterity of that people, when they said, "What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David," 1 Kings, xii. 16.

The case of the family of the Stuarts is exactly in point here. This intolerant family was hurled from the throne of Britain, and obliged to take refuge in foreign countries, after oppressing the people, and cruelly persecuting them, especially on account of religion.

It is impolitic in the civil government of any country, to indulge in any species of persecution. The perpetuity of governments depends upon their ruling in equity,

Persecution both criminal and dangerous ;

without respect of persons, and in dealing out their protection with impartiality. This will ever secure the esteem and attachment of the subjects. Whilst persecution, under whatever name, becomes the most criminal and dangerous, when directed against a righteous, praying people ; or what the Bible terms, *The people of God*. It is worthy of observation, that scarcely any government ever treated these with cruelty, and remained long without some signal proof of the displeasure of Jehovah. Pharaoh and the taskmasters, the first government persecutors we read of in the Bible, were overwhelmed in the Red Sea.

The rich and powerful government of the Babylonian empire, was suddenly destroyed, and that in the midst of the greatest security, after captivating the posterity of Jacob, and keeping them in bondage ; and while this government, at a drunken feast, was triumphing over the Hebrews and insulting their God, when heated with wine, Belshazzar commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein. And while they drank out of these vessels, which had been dedicated to the only true God, in triumph over him, they praised their gods, which were made of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone : in that same hour, the visible hand, of an otherwise invisible agent, wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall, *God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it :—Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians*. And in that same night was Belshazzar slain, and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom. By this memorable transfer of power, did the Almighty open the way for the restoration of his chosen people, to the enjoyment of their liberty and their religious privileges.

and subversive of civil governments.

The most powerful of all governments that ever existed, that of the Romans did not stand long, after it persecuted, afflicted, and tormented the church of God. On the commencement of the Christian Era, that mighty and extensive empire had been growing in size, and in splendor, for more than seven hundred years: but when it set itself against the truth, and the people of God, it was afflicted with many calamities, and was soon destroyed by intestine broils, and cruel barbarians. God has a principal hand, and sometimes a vengeful hand, in all great changes in nations and dynasties: "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them." Psalm lxxv. 6, 7, 8.

Meantime, "the liberal man," and especially the liberal governor, "deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." Isa. xxxii. 8. Who can doubt for a moment, that the liberal and tolerating spirit which has been so uniformly displayed by the family which now wears the crown of Britain, has very materially contributed to make it remain firmly seated upon the throne, while so many surrounding princes have been hurled from their elevated seats.

Further, whatever is of God will stand by its own strength, under the protection of heaven, without any coercive or violent aid: and no work, or cause of God, can be effectually overturned, by any power whatsoever. Meantime, it is an awful thing to be found fighting against God; yea, even when men, like Saul of Tarsus, do it ignorantly, and because they think they ought so to do, Acts xxvi. 9. 1 Tim. i. 13

Nature of Toleration explained.

The subject of Religious Liberty is so interesting, that I enlarge this part of the work much beyond my previous intention. New ideas are suggested, which I think sufficiently important to insert. *Toleration* has been distinguished into *complete* and *partial*. It is *complete*, when in addition to Religious Liberty, the subject is allowed to enjoy every privilege and office belonging to the civil government. It is *partial*, when the subject is put under some political incapacity, though he may be allowed to enjoy his religious liberty in the fullest extent. A government that does not allow one of these sorts of Toleration, cannot be maintained without *force*. But there are many unanswerable arguments to be urged against employing force, in matters of faith, modes of worship, or forms of religious discipline.

Force is *unsuitable* to the subject. True Religion depends upon conviction; and all rational conviction depends upon evidence. But external force, whatever it may do at the body, can do nothing towards producing such a conviction in the mind. Nay, an attempt thus to insult and force our understanding, would naturally tend to the contrary. Our Saviour gives no countenance to such an exercise of the civil power for the promotion of truth and righteousness. "My kingdom," said he, "is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." John xviii. 36. "The weapons of the Christian's warfare, are not carnal, but mighty through God." 2 Cor. x. 4. Force is so far from assisting a man to get a proper understanding of divine truth, that it tends to prevent the necessary inquiries. The dread of the inquisition, or other pains, and penalties, has often deterred the timid from a proper examination of the truths of the gospel. And on the other hand, perhaps in no one instance, did these things

Force unsuited to the dissemination of religious opinion.

tend to produce a proper understanding of the truths which are after godliness.

When a man attempts to propagate his own system of religion, by force, it furnishes a very strong argument against it. It is from weakness rather than strength of argument, that a man has recourse to compulsion. It is generally the man who has the wrong side of an argument, who loses his temper first; and, perhaps, it is *always* the party least in the right, that has recourse to coercive measures. At any rate, force is unnecessary to propagate truth, for "truth is great, and will prevail."

The experience which every truly christian man has of his own ignorance and liability to err, will dispose him to exercise charity and forbearance towards those who differ from him in sentiment, and incline him to follow the advice of the apostle, 2 Tim. ii. 25. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth."

While *force* cannot propagate either truth or holiness, it powerfully tends to make hypocrites. Persecution destroys, or depresses men of principle and integrity, and affords the most powerful temptation to hypocrisy and apostasy; encourages the worst of men; and gives the children's bread unto dogs. The noble army of martyrs have, in various ages and nations, remained stedfast and immoveable, and sometimes have endured torture, not accepting deliverance, Heb. xi. but in too many instances, the fear of suffering has induced men to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

Intolerance, or persecution, for they are both the same, has often produced wars and commotions in different countries: this was the case in Germany, at the time of the reformation; in France, when a civil war commence

under the reign of Charles the Ninth, and continued for near thirty years; and in the Low Countries, which terminated in the deliverance of Holland from the civil and ecclesiastical tyranny of Spain. This same spirit had no small share in exciting the civil war in our own country, which produced such lamentable consequences.

This narrow coercive spirit, has a tendency to impoverish, and even to depopulate a country. Men who are denied liberty in their native country, will be inclined to seek for it elsewhere. And our Saviour's indulgent direction is, "when they persecute you in one city," or country, "flee to another." Consequently, when there was a persecution at Jerusalem, about Stephen, many of the Christians sought an asylum in distant countries. Acts xi. 19.

The persecuted may not go off in large bodies, or all at once. But many of them are sure to go, when circumstances, under Providence, shall point out the way. The state will be drained of its best citizens, though, perhaps, gradually, and almost insensibly; and the loss will be the more sensibly felt, as foreigners will not be inclined to put themselves under a government that would enslave the very soul, as well as the body. History affords striking illustrations of the truth of this observation, from Spain, France, and other countries, where persecution, or impolitic intolerance has reigned. The proscribed inhabitants left their native country, and carried into other lands those arts and manufactures with which they were not permitted to enrich their own. Similar causes will produce similar effects, wherever the same spirit is suffered to prevail. *Before* persecution, the land is as the garden of Eden, and *behind* it a desolate wilderness.

Intolerance is exceedingly degrading to national character. Every persecuting government of former times,

Mankind have an equal right to liberty of conscience.

comes down to us in the page of history, under a stigma. Egypt, in which was probably the first *national* persecution, was laid under a heavy and lasting curse, from which it is not yet delivered. Strangers have ruled over it, and it has been for many ages, the basest of all kingdoms. Ezek. xxix. 15.

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, was doomed to be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and very principally, because of the oppressions and miseries which the Babylonians had heaped upon the seed of Jacob, who were then God's visible church. The very name of Babylon is handed down to us loaded with infamy. And those they made to serve with hard bondage, are directed, in holy triumph over their persecutors, to say, "How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!" &c. Isa. xiv. 4—19.

Mankind have an equal right to uncontrolled liberty of conscience; that is, a right to think and choose for themselves, in every thing purely religious. It is the unalienable birthright of every human being, to choose his own religion, and to worship God as he thinks the best. God never gave any man, or number of men, authority to deprive any person whatsoever of this right. And yet, how often has this been attempted; and sometimes even in England. This was done particularly by the *Act of Uniformity, and the Act against conventicles*. Both these have long disgraced the statute-book, and are a stain upon the former legislators of Britain. It is hoped, that a system so narrow, unjust, impolitic, and cruel, will never be revived. But of this we have no absolute certainty. The spirit of persecution, in some form, exists in every country; and so long as this continues to be the case, the principles of equal liberty, religious as well as civil, will need to be studied, inculcated, and asserted.

Erroneous opinions of toleration.

Many are ashamed to defend general persecution, but call our attention to the act of Toleration, as if all our rights were to be proved from it. Whereas that did not *create* any right, but merely declare that Englishmen should enjoy, at least, some part of their rights. And if that act has not provided for the full, equal, unrestrained liberty of every man, in matters purely religious, it will only prove that it ought to be extended, and not contracted. We do not *prove* our rights by that act; but only *claim* them as far as that act will enable us. But those who passed that act had no authority to make it the exact measure of the liberty which should always be enjoyed in England.

In fact, all ideas of toleration spring from the supposition of an authority which cannot be proved. All men are equally accountable to the supreme Judge. And the notion of an authority to tolerate, implies equally a notion of power to prohibit. But in what way can such an authority be proved? In nothing is the Bishop of Rome more justly the object of our indignation, than in his claiming dominion over conscience, as to articles of faith, and forms of worship and discipline. The property, influence, wisdom, and even piety of any man, do not empower him to thrust himself in between God and the immortal souls of men; and to usurp dominion over men's faith and religious practice. And whatever name may be given to such interference, Mr. Charles Wesley has justly observed,

“ 'Tis Babel, Antichrist, and Pope, and Devil.”

The Methodists have been content and thankful. They revere and love the king, and have great confidence in his justice and royal protection. But it has been said, “ Something *must* be done to check the alarming spread

Impolicy of opposing the Methodists.

of Methodism." I answer, if Methodism be an evil, it ought to be checked; but if it be a good thing, no man can attempt to check it, without being found fighting against God. And "let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth," let one earthly brittle government go to war with another; but woe to the man, who contendeth with his Maker," by opposing the instruction, reformation, and salvation of mankind, through the instrumentality of a preached gospel. What right have you to say, This ought to be done only in a church. Shew me the passage of scripture, that gives the slightest countenance to such an idea. For any thing written in the Bible, the Methodist preachers have, at least, as much *divine* authority for acting as they do, as the clergy have for their conduct.

This principle of doing something *to check the growth* of Methodism, is the very same that Pharaoh and the taskmasters acted upon, as may be seen, Exodus, chap. the first. But the plan did not eventually succeed. For, though the people of God may be harassed and oppressed; still they will be found the *bush*, which, though burning in the fire, cannot be consumed. For, when oppressors obtain a momentary triumph over them, God over-rules even that for the furtherance of the gospel, the promotion of his own glory, and the overthrow of persecutors. It is upon this ground, that I console myself with a hope, that should the enemies of religious liberty, and of the Methodists, be permitted by a mysterious Providence to curtail religious liberty, by making some new restrictive laws, it will be over-ruled for the accomplishment of some gracious design of God in conferring the greatest blessings upon mankind.

It was a striking circumstance, that just at the time when general liberty of conscience was establishing upon the continent of Europe, when the pope was dethroned

and banished from Rome, when the inquisition was drawing its horrid gasp in Spain and Portugal, that men should have been found, even in England, which had so long been the asylum of civil and religious liberty, forging chains for the most harmless, peaceable, and useful body of people in the nation. And it was attempted, in conformity with the plan of all persecutors of ancient times, under pretence of guarding religion against what would injure or disgrace it ! They put on the face of a lamb ; but if they had succeeded in their enterprise, the act would have been that of a lion. “Something,” said they, “is needful to be done ; but we intend nothing contrary to a wise and enlightened toleration.”

Much has often been said upon the subject of *Toleration*. Let us review the celebrated theory. To worship God in any particular way, must be either *right* or *wrong*. If it be right, it must be agreeable to God. And when a thing is agreeable to God, is your displeasure, or the want of your licence, or toleration, sufficient to make it wrong ? Presumptuous, sinful mortal ! And, it is fairly implied, that even God himself shall not have rendered to him what is right, and agreeable to him, without your permission ! The idea of toleration looks both to the *worshipper* and *worshipped*. Had this always been attended to, some acts of toleration would have struck men with horror. Suppose, for instance, some hearty, but unthinking friend should move in parliament, for leave to bring in a bill to tolerate Almighty God, to be worshipped in buildings unconsecrated by bishops, and to allow him to be prayed to, and spoken of, in dwelling-houses, and even in the highways, and in the streets and lanes of cities and towns ; who would not be struck with horror at the profaneness of such a motion ! Yet, this is implied, directly or indirectly, in all proposals for toleration in matters of religion.

Lawful claims of civil governors.

Upon due consideration, it would appear, that there really have been men who have seriously conceived the idea of conferring favours and liberties upon the Almighty, in matters belonging to religious worship.—Look into the celebrated *Magna Charta*, or *The Great Charter* of England. The latter part of the preamble, says, “Know ye, that we, unto the honour of Almighty God, and for the salvation of the souls of our progenitors and successors, Kings of England, &c. of our mere and free-will, have given and granted these liberties following:—

“First; WE HAVE GRANTED TO GOD, *and by this our present Charter have confirmed*, for us and for our heirs for ever, that the Church of England shall be free, and shall have all her whole rights and liberties inviolable.”

Is not every man struck with horror at the arrogance of a poor sinful worm taking upon himself, in the plenitude of his bounty and condescension, to make GRANTS unto the Author of his being and every blessing, the high and the lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity! And if the arrogant presumption of man can induce him to think, that he has conferred favours upon, or made GRANTS to Almighty God, then surely he must expect the Almighty will one day acknowledge the obligation, and return him thanks.

Our Saviour's well known words are decisive in this case; “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.” *Cæsar*, or the Roman emperor, was their supreme civil governor, and included all the subordinate governors, as they all derived their authority from him, and acted under him.—And what things were his? and what things are belonging to civil governors in general? Why,

1. They have a right to “*tribute*,” or taxes. As they have to pay the expences of governing and protecting

The Methodists obedient to the higher powers.

their respective empires, which government and protection were instituted for the general benefit of the inhabitants, it is right that they should each pay a reasonable share of the expenses. And I will venture to say, that the Methodists pay their share of taxes, at least as faithfully and cheerfully as any church people.

2. As money alone will not enable Cæsar, or the civil power, to govern and protect the empire, men bearing arms will also be wanted. And do the Methodists refuse to take their share in the regular or local militia? And do they not in this branch of public service, acquit themselves with as much care and propriety as any churchmen?

I must observe, 3. That they do not refuse to pay tithes, or other church rates; nor have they any design to abolish or alienate these revenues of the clergy. Can Cæsar desire any thing more? Can he *demand* any thing more, without *demanding* "the things which are God's?" Here it is needful to observe, first, the civil government has no right to *command* what is contrary to the commandments of God, even in what relates to the body, our fellow-creatures, and the present world. Secondly, civil governors have no right at all to interfere between God and the souls of men. Civil government and religion, are two things totally separate from each other. Yet, if governors choose to have a certain religion of their own, and to call it the religion of the nation, I shall not oppose them, and hope they will allow me the same liberty they claim for themselves. Were I a governor, I should want nothing more from my subjects. And if they were subjects who are now governors, I believe they would want nothing less than what I am contending for as a general right.

Will the persons who want to prescribe to me what opinions I shall believe, the form in which I shall worship

Governors should rule in the fear of the Lord.

God, and the rules of church government, by which they wish me to be regulated, undertake to answer for me at the day of judgment, and to insure my eternal salvation, provided I comply with their wishes? And, if they should *undertake* this, can I, with confidence and due security, leave the matter in their hands?

Let human governors “*study to be quiet*, and mind their own business,” and rest assured that the Almighty will mind his. Let them rule in the fear of the Lord, in civil affairs, and prove themselves to be the ministers of God for good. Meantime, without their obtrusive interference, the true ark of God will be upheld, the heavenly King will rule in Zion, and the world will witness, that he who keepeth Israel, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.

If, from the day of Pentecost to the present time, Christianity had been left to itself and its Author, *unhelped* as well as *unhindered* by human authority, what would have been the state of the church of Christ, and of the world at large this day? Human authority in matters of religion, has, in ten thousand instances, been the worm at the root of the gourd. And in how many instances has it been of any real service to religion? Let God and the devil, truth and error, fight it fairly out, and victory will declare itself on the right side.

It is of importance to remark, that while our Saviour's apostles, in imitation of their master, “rendered to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's,” they paid no attention to Cæsar in matters of religion. Nay, they never so much as sought for an act of toleration, or a licence from any court, to qualify them to “go into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature,” either in Judea, (where there was an established church, and one established by

God himself,) at Antioch, at Ephesus, Corinth, or any other place which they visited.

Had such an act of government existed, and been conformed to, in Judea, and the other countries where the gospel was planted by the apostles, as that which some have wished for, the glad tidings of salvation had never been published to the world. Read the New Testament, and the Acts of the Apostles especially, and then say, whether the gospel could have been propagated at all, under the following regulations.

1. If no person had been allowed to preach, but those who did nothing else, the apostle Paul himself must have been silent; for he often wrought at tent-making.

2. If no person had been "allowed to preach to more than *one* congregation," nor to that without a licence, the gospel could not have been propagated, and the world had still remained in darkness and the shadow of death.

3. Had a certificate of their character been required, and a petition for their licence to preach, and that even before they had preached in any place, they could never have gone "into all the world, and preached the gospel to every creature." The apostles had no certificate from the rulers of Jerusalem, nor did they seek for any such authority. The case would have been the same, if it had been enacted, "that there shall be no preaching except in some place built for the purpose." Hardly ever did the apostles preach in a place of this description; nor Jesus Christ, except a few times. Enraged as the devil was, at the first spread of truth and righteousness, and numerous and active as priests were, both Jewish and Pagan, it is surprising that no person was employed to carry such an antichristian plan into execution.

Remarks on Lord Sidmouth's speech.

Lord S—— has said, “*So many unfit persons take upon them to preach, that he feared for the understanding of the country.*” But, I appeal to the nation at large, whether those who have attended the preaching of the Methodists, be increased or decreased in understanding: and whether they are inferior or superior in understanding, to church people in the same ranks in society, and of the same degrees of education. I ask this especially, as it respects understanding on spiritual subjects: for if this preaching has darkened or perverted the understanding of the hearers in any thing, it must be on that subject to which these preachers confine all their attention and discourse. Can any person bring forward an equal number of church people, of the same ranks in society, and of the same degrees of education, who will be found more able to converse upon all the essential doctrines of the Christian religion? The Methodists, with all their reputed ignorance, have nothing to dread from a comparison of this nature.

The way in which some statesmen and divines speak upon the subject of toleration, conveys the idea, that they think it a special act of kindness, to permit any thing in religion but what they fully approve. But, liberty of conscience, is the common and equal right of all. This ought not to be considered as a thing enjoyed upon mere *sufferance*. There are some roads, which are used upon mere *sufferance*, but which the proprietors may stop when they choose: while common roads are equally open to all. Now the path of unrestrained liberty of conscience, is no road to be travelled upon mere *sufferance*. Let those who think otherwise prove their opinion from the scriptures.

Should any one say, “that even upon the most public roads, there are turnpike-gates, at which the traveller must wait, and pay for the opening;” I answer, that it

The present royal family favorable to religious liberty.

is in consequence of certain persons undertaking to improve the roads, and keep them in repair. But, the road to heaven cannot be improved, nor can any man undertake to keep it in repair. Besides, of *this* road, no "commissioners" have been appointed, nor gate-renters engaged. Here is a strait gate, and a narrow way; but no persons have been employed to tend the one or mend the other. Meantime, persons of different sentiments, modes of worship, and religious connexions, may enter the gate, and walk in the way. And no authority can be proved from scripture, to belong to a minister of an established church, as a surveyor, or controller of the way, any more than to any other ministers. Rather, we might say, they are all equally excluded. The road is made; it never wants mending; and it has no surveyor, controller, or superintendent, but HE who is the WAY, as well as the truth and the life. There is a way, a high way, and it shall be called, *The way of holiness.*

Whatever absurdity or impropriety there may be attached to the idea of toleration, no blame attaches to the present royal family of Britain. The Toleration Act was passed between twenty and thirty years before the house of Hanover ascended the throne of these realms. At the time of enacting that statute, and also before and after that period, the universal right of liberty respecting religion, was but imperfectly understood. It is to the honour of the reigning family, that they have never manifested the smallest desire to infringe upon religious liberty; and that any changes which may have taken place upon this point in the laws of the land, have all been on the favourable side. The Methodists are very sensible, and gratefully conscious of the never-failing attention of the King to their rights, whenever application has been made. As circumstances were, when the

Opposition of the clergy to the Methodist preachers.

Brunswick family began their reign in England, and have continued since, they could not well have attempted to do more in favour of liberty of conscience than they have done; and they have done much.

The inconsistency of the charges of the clergy, against the Methodist preachers, must not pass totally unnoticed.

In former years, many have affected to despise the Methodist preachers, as being few, and especially as being so insignificant, ignorant, and every way unqualified and insufficient; and consequently never likely to make any great impression on the public at large, or obtain any general influence. But the late general outcry seemed to speak a great change of sentiment. The idea perpetually held up to the public, and vociferated from Dan to Beersheba was, that the Methodist preachers were becoming so formidable, and more and more terrific to these learned, and duly qualified gentlemen, that unless the temporal sword was called to their assistance, very shortly a few persons, whom they called "ignorant mechanics," or "insufficient and unauthorized teachers," would lay all the power, honours, and influence of archbishops, bishops, and 18,000 clergymen, represented as the most pious, rational, learned, and valuable men in the world, in the dust. But if either of these ideas had been true, if the Methodist preachers had been so contemptible from the want of abilities, or if so numerous a body as the clergy, had been so very respectable, and every way fitted for the work of the ministry, and permanent influence, this alarm must have been ill-founded. Let them take which side of the argument they like best: but both sides they cannot take without flagrant contradiction.

There are nearly forty times as many clergy of the established church in England as Methodist preachers

Religious opinions and modes of worship should be free.

set apart for the work. Surely forty learned and respectable clergymen, aided by the temporal sword, must be more than a match for one Methodist preacher.

Had the doctrines of the Methodists been contrary to those of the church of England, and even contrary to the Bible, no person could shew any scriptural authority for interfering in religious opinions, nor even in modes of worship. And should they say, truth ought to be defended, and error opposed, I ask, Who made them rulers or judges in such matters? Whatever may be wrong in the church of Christ, whether in doctrine or discipline, it is not the business of the civil power, but of the church of Christ itself, to rectify the same. Or, if what is wrong cannot be rectified, then to perform such acts of discipline as the case may require. And here the utmost care will be necessary, to avoid blind, rash, or intemperate zeal, and to let pure unadulterated scripture, in the hands of Christian charity, direct and guide. To insist upon the contrary is to have recourse to the arguments, or rather the fallacies of the church of Rome, in opposition to every branch and stage of the reformation. Scripture alone ought to be appealed to, and every man be allowed the right of forming his own opinion as to its genuine meaning. And unless some human beings did *really* possess what the Pope has so long falsely *pretended* to, namely, *infallibility*, and *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, no man has a right to dictate to another. In this point of privilege, "no one is before or after another." And as every man must give an *account* of himself, so every man should *judge* for himself.

Of late years, the Methodists have attracted much public attention, and the clergy of the established church have appeared to be alarmed at the rapid spread of Methodism. This alarm has been proclaimed in nume-

rous publications from the press. These fears of the clergy were infused into some members of Parliament. A purpose to enact some restrictive statute, which might prevent the increase of Methodists and Dissenters was announced. But the persons who engaged in the business, appeared very much at a loss in what way to proceed. Doubtless they wished to do something, and something very serious too; but they seemed not to know how to go about it, without exciting an alarm. They feared the effect which such a measure might produce, especially in such times. There can be little doubt that this has been the chief, if not the sole cause, why the business has not been sooner brought forward. My opinion is, that Providence permitted certain convulsions and distresses, which caused the delay for the preservation of his own people. The weapon, it is believed, was formed and prepared against them, for some years. But something still happened, to fill the hands of those who were disposed to strike with other work, and their hearts with doubtful apprehensions, so that the business was repeatedly postponed to a more convenient season. And those who feared God, and called upon his name, continued to cry day and night unto Him, and the Lord who saved Israel from the execution of the cruel designs of Haman and his associates, screened them from all the crafts and assaults of men and devils. Here is the great and effectual resource of the genuine Christian when threatened with danger. Christians, in trouble or danger, "trust in the Lord at all times;" "continue in prayer;" and "no weapon formed against you shall prosper, but every tongue which rises in judgment, He shall condemn."

If any proposal should at last be seriously brought forward in order to abridge our religious liberties, I think it probable it will be considerably narrowed and frittered

down from what certain circumstances led us to expect. The *whole* measure, in all its original parts, may be deemed impracticable, at least at *the present*. But when this softened measure shall have somewhat settled upon the stomach, something more may be done, and that, perhaps, under the pretence of explaining and amending the former act. It is evident there is a great unwillingness to be explicit as to what is intended or desired to be done.

The active persons in this business will probably avow themselves the friends of toleration; and perhaps may go so far as to say, they believe the measure will meet the approbation of the general body of Dissenters. But such declarations should be received with suspicion, or at least with great caution. For (1.) It has been the general practice of those who have exerted themselves against religion, in whatever age or nation, to make pretensions of friendship and zeal for religion. They have generally pretended, that they only wanted to check dangerous and growing evils, and to secure orthodoxy and order. (2.) Those who profess friendship to Dissenters, would give better proofs of their sincerity, by letting them alone. But such declarations are thought to be convenient for allaying suspicion, and lulling the intended victims asleep, till the fetters are quite ready for the feet, or the mine prepared for springing.

(3.) It is possible that some one denomination of Dissenters would be glad if restrictions were put upon other denominations. Suppose, for instance, those whose ministers uniformly pass through an academical training, or some of those who have a settled ministry among them, might be pleased to see a law made to prohibit every thing of a contrary description. And if the design which is in contemplation, should be carried

into execution, one sort of Dissenters may be left untouched, and perhaps flattered, till the others be bound hand and foot. Dissenters of every denomination should be aware of this, and unitedly oppose every infringement upon our present liberties. For if an infringement take place in one instance, it may then be the more easy to make another and another, till liberty or toleration may almost cease to exist except in name.*

(4.) If Lord S—— be really desirous of preventing or removing improprieties in the Christian ministry, let him turn his first attention to the clergy of the established church. Are there no defects there as to “age, capacity, or character?” *Physician, heal thyself.* “First cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother’s eye.”

As to *age*, the New Testament fixes no particular age under which a man may not preach. The law of Moses says something upon this head, that is not binding upon Christians, because it respects the ancient priests as types of Christ. Hence it is full as peremptory respecting being *too old* as *too young*: a priest was not to officiate after he was fifty years old. Of the two, the being *very young*, is far more tolerable than being *too old*. The young man will be mending of this imperfection every day, while the old man’s defects will every day increase. Besides, should we adopt the Mosaic regulations respecting *age* in those who minister in holy things, insuperable objections will be raised against most of those who are made bishops. Few of these put on the mitre till they are more than fifty years of age. If it be said,

* The last three paragraphs, as well as the two following, were written and published before Lord S—— brought in his Bill. The attentive reader may make his own reflections.

The oppressive tendency of Lord Sidmouth's Bill.

“they do not attempt to preach much;” I answer, so much the worse. *Unpreaching prelates* have always been considered, by the wisest and best of men, as serious evils. The examination of candidates for the ministry, the rejection of improper ones, and ordination of those who are fitted for the office and work, must be allowed to be very important, and to require the full vigour and exercise of the intellectual powers as much as any thing done by the priests in the tabernacle or the temple.

When objection is made to the *capacity* of some Methodist preachers and Dissenting ministers, I have no scruple in affirming, that even the feeblest among them, will suffer no disgrace from a comparison with some of the clergy of the establishment.

But “the chief object” says Lord S——, “which I have in view, is to require from a person intending to act under a licence, a certificate from the congregation or sect to which he belongs, that he is a competent person, in their opinion, to the discharge of the duties of a preacher, and that it is at their recommendation he applies for the licence.” This is intended for the purpose of throwing obstacles in the way of Dissenters. It is true, it would be easy for most of those who apply for licences to obtain such certificates. But the whole scheme implies such an acknowledgment of human authority in matters of religion as is inconsistent with the word of God. And might we not say, that if Dissenting ministers and Methodist preachers should have such a certificate in order to be licensed, would it not be equally proper that candidates for episcopal ordination should have something similar? And ought not all who are made rectors, vicars, &c. to have such a certificate from the parishes they are appointed to.

Many persons will not see, or at least will not admit,

The influence of Methodism on its own members.

what are the real causes of the increase of Dissenters and Methodists. These, I have estimated, are the making men Christian ministers who are not Christians; the defective plan of appointing them to their respective charges; and the lax discipline which so generally prevails.

Perhaps some may expect me to say something *on the influence of Methodism*. And, (1.) Its influence on its own members. Out of the thousands, and tens of thousands, who have become Methodists, I believe there has not been one instance of any person becoming less moral in consequence of being a Methodist. There may have been a few instances of persons who have crept in among them, from unrighteous motives, whose morals have been exceptionable; but this was not the fault of Methodism. It was not an effect of which Methodism was the cause.

In ninety-nine out of a hundred, the change of morals for the better has been visible, and in many instances most remarkably striking. A Noble Lord dolorously observed, what an affecting sight it was to see so many insufficient teachers apply to the quarter sessions for licences. We answer, that these men never would have applied, had not the daily agitated and impending storm of persecution driven them. But, if he would have proved Methodism to be a real and alarming evil, he should have been able to tell, what an astonishing number of Methodists were to be tried for riots, thefts, and other offences against the public welfare at the quarter sessions, and also at the assizes. But alas! he could not have mentioned this, without awakening the general recollection, that scarcely was there ever a Methodist brought to trial for felony, burglary, or grand or petty larceny, since Methodism had an existence. Some few persons of this offending description, and but a very few,

Promotes mental improvement, and improves temporal circumstances.

may have had the name of Methodist. But in such cases, without a single exception, the name has either been given them wrongfully altogether, or they have been backsliders from Methodism. They are neither Methodists nor Dissenters, who fill our prisons, stand at the bar for trial at quarter sessions and assizes, swing upon our gallowses, dwell on board the hulks, and are sent to people New Holland. Among culprits, Methodists are never found ; while among all the promoters of every institution for the public good, they frequently constitute the majority.

(2.) Methodism contributes to promote mental improvement. The Methodists very generally improve in useful knowledge, of other descriptions as well as religious. And as to the silly charge of Methodism turning people mad, it scarcely deserves notice. There is no denomination of people, but have some insane persons among them ; witness the Quakers, who have a large mad-house near York, called, “ The Friends’ Retreat,” in which are many patients. But, of all the insane people in England, I dare venture to affirm, that ninety-nine out of every hundred are neither Methodists nor Dissenters. And in general, it was not religion, but something much worse than even enthusiasm, that brought on the delirium. It is not in the nature and tendency of true piety to make its votaries melancholy, but rather to promote a sound mind and a good understanding.

(3.) Methodism powerfully tends to improve the temporal circumstances of those who have embraced it : religion at once promotes industry and frugality. The godly man sees the sinfulness of sloth ; and he cannot, as formerly, spend his money in sinful gratification, nor even in what some call innocent trifles. He considers himself as steward of the property God has placed in his hands, of which he must hortly account. And

Its influence on society at large.

though his contributions to support and propagate religion may amount to something considerable, yet this is a trifle compared with his savings from sin, the *temporal* advantages derived from religion. Hence, it is a fact, which cannot with truth be denied, that the Methodists in general, are more rich, than they were before they became such.

(4.) Under its influence, parents have restrained their children from wild and foolish conduct; have set them a good example and instilled into them religious instruction: the same remark will apply to masters and servants.

(5.) They have not only been among the foremost to aid every charity of previous establishment, but they have instituted new ones, and especially *The Benevolent Society*, for the relief of the sick poor in numerous places, and *The Strangers' Friend Society*, for the relief of poor destitute strangers.

(6.) The active concern of the Methodists has not been confined to their own families. They have done more than all the other denominations of Christians, in establishing, supporting, teaching, and encouraging Sunday-schools. They have had a principal hand, both in establishing and supporting the Sunday-schools in most parts of the nation. These schools are principally taught by Methodists, and that gratuitously. Not less than 100,000 children, I believe, are every Sunday instructed gratuitously by members of the Methodist Societies. And in some places, the Methodists are among the principal supporters of the charity-schools.

Methodism might expostulate with her enemies and persecutors and say, "Many good works have I shewed you: for which of those works do ye stone me?" John x. 32. And when these persecutors would rouse the civil magistrate to make use of force against the Me-

Benevolent institutions among the Methodists.

thodists, he may justly ask, in the language of Pilate, "Why? what evil have they done?" Mark xv. 14. We may most truly say of Methodism, that she ought to be "well reported of for good works; that she has brought up children; has lodged strangers; has washed the saints' feet; has relieved the afflicted; and has diligently followed every good work." 1 Tim. v. 10. Methodism has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and visited the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, nor has she neglected the sick, or the imprisoned. If men will not believe the doctrines of Methodism, let them at least do due honour to its beneficent influence.

A few of the more opulent and benevolent among the Methodists, some few years ago, thought that some of their own itinerant preachers were very proper objects of charity, especially such as had large families, no private property, in poor circuits and visited with family sickness. These considerate and generous Christians, therefore, instituted what they termed "*The Preachers' Friend Society.*"

To support this institution, individuals in different parts of the nation, contribute half a guinea, a guinea, and some more, annually. A committee in London undertake the management of it, but neither the conference, nor any of the travelling preachers, have any thing to do with it. The committee get the best information they can respecting preachers who may be in distressed circumstances, and often surprise them by sending very seasonable relief. The committee publish an annual report of their receipts and disbursements, accompanied by extracts of letters received from preachers who have been relieved. Many of these extracts are very affecting, and calculated to make even "Misers wonder they should part with gold."

(7.) Methodism has had a great, and very beneficial

Interesting anecdote of his present Majesty.

effect upon the morals of the inhabitants of England at large, as well as Ireland. It has accomplished already, an extensive reformation. This has not been equal in all places. But its greatest enemies cannot deny, that a great change for the better has been effected in districts the most notorious for every vice. And as vice is perpetually progressive, it is impossible to form an adequate conception of the desperate state of wickedness they might have arrived at by this time, had it not been for this very efficacious remedy provided by a gracious God!

And is the nation arrived at such a pitch of reformation and piety, that there is no more occasion for the labours of men who have been so useful in the hand of God? Is there such general purity, righteousness, sobriety, among all ranks of men, from the least even unto the greatest, that gospel labours, which have been so successful, ought to be restrained, or contracted within narrow limits? In this "cloudy and dark day," this "day of the trumpet and alarm," is it seasonable, is it wise and politic, to attempt to fetter those who cry day and night to God, in behalf of their neighbours, the king and government, as well as the nation at large?

It is with pleasure I this moment recollect the following anecdote:—Not many years ago, when one told our good king, that persons who were not church people, prayed for him; he answered, "I place more confidence in the prayers of my people, than in my fleets and armies." In such cases, kings may be said to be nursing fathers, and queens, nursing mothers of the church of Christ. And, upon every occasion, the king has proved himself our firm friend, and has laid us under obligations to love and pray for him. But our *chief* dependence must ever be upon a higher Being.—While we look to the king, with all due confidence in his

Conclusion.

justice, and piety, we must remember who it is that says, "*Trust not in princes, nor in any child of man; for there is no help in them.*" But while we fear God, duly honour and pray for the king, and commit our cause to him who is "*King of kings, and Lord of lords,*" we have the best assurance of being able to sing, "**THE LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US; THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR REFUGE.**" *Amen.*

FINIS.

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